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MODERN ENGLISH HISTORY

A GUIDE
TO
MODERN ENGLISH HISTORY

BY
Johnson
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" "

PART I.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THIS book has grown out of an attempt made some years ago to give some account of English politics to a foreign guest who was at the time reading English history for an examination at one of the Inns of Court: this guest was not a Christian nor an European. It has been found inconvenient to adhere to the plan of adapting statements to so remote a mind. But it has seemed good nevertheless to try to explain many terms which in ordinary books are assumed to be understood ; for not only do intelligent Frenchmen, such as the writers in the ' *Revue des deux Mondes*, ' make a great many mistakes about English things, but also amongst English gentlefolks and educated voters there is but little knowledge about the meaning of terms employed in political writings.

A GUIDE TO THE MODERN HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

I.

THE year 1815 makes an epoch for the students of politics. It is convenient for them to start from this point, because it is here that they see, what they cannot find farther back in chronology, a complete settlement of rights and limits made for all Europe and its dependencies by the chief nations. The Europeans were forced by long and painful experience to mark the close of the wars which had begun in 1792, by a treaty, or, more precisely, by a set of treaties more comprehensive and better calculated for permanence than any former treaties.

In 1792 there had been one nation thoroughly in earnest about war; this was the French people, asserting its right to be a Republic. Some years after this republican people had proved untrue to itself and unreasonably obedient to a soldier, the hateful tyranny of its master grew to such excess that it made all other monarchies, even the worst, comparatively acceptable; and by the stress of invasion the two kindred peoples of the Spanish Peninsula,

Spain and Portugal, were beaten and warmed into hearty combativeness. The same provocation drove the great hordes of Russia into wholesome patriotism. And then a fourth people, greater than these three, but divided and bound, was at last able to combine, though imperfectly, and to avenge itself on the French oppressor. This fourth people was the German. There were two great German States, Prussia and Austria. Prussia then held in subjection a portion of an alien country, Poland, and Austria then led and eclipsed the ancient and robust nation of Hungary. Except Portugal, there was not one of these nations which had not at one time or another served the French tyrant as an accomplice.

There was besides Portugal one European State which had never been brought so low. This was the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, which was called by diplomatists Angleterre, and is generally denoted by the name which corresponds to Angleterre, England.

England, finally severed from France, or from provinces of France, in the middle of the fifteenth century, had early in the sixteenth incorporated with itself the people of its oldest mountains, the people of Wales. In the sixteenth, and in the early part of the seventeenth century, it had mastered and partially colonised the adjacent island of Ireland; had much more recently, at a time of sore need, treated this dependency almost as a foreign ally, and at the beginning of our century had, by an Act of Union, apparently completed its incorporation. With the northern part

of Britain its union was really solid. The northern part of Britain contained two races, the Gael or Highlanders, and the Lowlanders, speaking a Teutonic language very near akin to English, and for literature using the true English tongue. The Lowlanders had contended in customary senseless wars with the richer English people up to the middle of the sixteenth century, and had been subdued a hundred years later by the founder of the English army, Oliver Cromwell. Through an admirable and unique process of statecraft, this Scotland had been at the opening of the eighteenth century brought into national unity with England, and admitted to the full use of all the commercial advantages derived from the English system of colonies and trading companies, retaining its own municipal law and its national Christian Church establishment. Within the generation which first profited by this union, the Scots had supported England in crushing certain seditious clans of the Highlands, which had tried to set up an intrusive king of Britain ; and for the sixty years which preceded our epoch, the whole of the British Islands, with the Orkney Isles, a dependency of Scotland, and with the islands of Guernsey and Jersey, and other small fragments of the old French province once attached to England, had formed a compact, though not a homogeneous State, capable of jointly founding and governing many distant dominions.

Before its struggle with the French Republic, the British State had waged two great wars with almost unbroken unanimity. In one it had, with the aid of

colonists, driven the French from the valley of the St. Lawrence, and the valley of the Ohio, in North America ; and had won for its merchants in the valley of the Ganges a power and a territory beyond the rivalry of those other Europeans who held trading towns in Asia. In the other war this proud nation, then rejoicing in unparalleled improvements, and breeding the most rational and inventive thinkers, had been, through the not unnatural jealousy of rival potentates, hampered and vexed by sea and land, in a conflict with its own people settled on the east coast of North America. A civil war, conducted on both sides in a spirit worthy of Englishmen, and involving no gratuitous pain, had ended in the courteous recognition of a new free commonwealth, the United States of America. This was thought by malignant lookers-on a fatal loss sustained by England ; but England had thriven nevertheless. She had by skill and hardihood retained and even strengthened that commercial lordship in India which, alone amongst all existing establishments, was seen and was felt to be imperial. Her farmers and manufacturers, guided by her philosophers, produced wealth enough to bear the wasteful blundering of her courtiers.

Ten years after the separation from the old plantations of North America, Britain was stronger by far than she had been thirty years before, at the close of her most triumphant war. For the third time did the compact British State, drawing strength also from the impulsive people of Ireland, begin with one consent a war of serious purpose ; for the men and

the women alike were sincerely angry with France. The French Republic was most deplorably marred by crimes ; it had shed in fear and suspicion more innocent blood than had ever been shed under form of law by a people emancipated from priestcraft. Resentment, such as was not felt by Spaniards, by Russians, or even by Germans, braced the sinews of the most intellectual and religious nation of Europe, the British nation. Before the crimes of the Republicans were forgotten, the arrogance of Napoleon Bonaparte became a fresh cause of indignation. Undismayed by the repeated failures of their best allies, the Austrians and Hungarians, smiling at the tergiversations of the Prussian and Russian sovereigns, applauding with surprise and joy the toughness and elasticity of the Spaniards, consoling themselves for many frustrated expeditions by unbroken success in India and by the annexation of many foreign dependencies, the Britons and the Irish continued steadfastly to do all they could against the heartless egotist who aimed at supremacy over Europe ; and they persisted in celebrating all victories, whether formal or real, by thanking ‘ the only ally that they did not pay, Providence.’

Therefore, when the French tyranny fell, and the victors met in the chief city of Austria to settle the European State-System, whilst all men owned the predominance of Five Powers, almost all men acknowledged also that the Island-State which had never flinched was the noblest, as it was beyond compare the richest, of the five.

Among the agents of the States, generally called diplomatists, it was customary to speak of this State as if it were embodied in a crowned man. This fiction was maintained in State papers written by British statesmen, particularly in those speeches and messages delivered to the United Parliament by which the ministers made known their purposes and reported their transactions. Thus it came to pass that in proclamations addressed to foreigners, and in conventions and treaties made with foreign States, it was habitually said that ‘His Britannick Majesty’ acted personally with other similar persons; and since the King of the United Kingdom, or, when he was set aside for incapacity, his son, under the title of Prince Regent, received visitors at a house called St. James’s Palace, formerly the town house of the King, there was another term in use for the British State: it was sometimes called the Court of St. James. The King was called George III. When young he had, for about twenty years, taken the first place in the Government. He had been, as he said himself, the last man in England that consented to the separation of England from the thirteen American colonies; but when that separation was resolved upon, he had been the first to acknowledge the envoy of the new free nation as a friend; and this he did with such manifest goodness of heart, that the American was moved to tears.¹ Soon after this happy deliverance from a false position, he had with extraordinary sagacity chosen,

¹ It is believed that George III. himself told this to Mr. Adolphus, who states it in his *History of England*.

and with admirable constancy upheld, a minister more kingly than himself, William Pitt the younger.

This greatest of ministers established the modern government of England. The characteristic of this form of government was the subordination of the King to that Council, formed out of the Peers and the Commons, which was called not the Privy Council, but the Cabinet. With one great exception, to be stated hereafter, the general custom, since the end of the great war between George III. and his American subjects, has been to this effect : that the debates and resolutions of the Cabinet are regularly laid before the King for his critical inspection, and that he can rescind them only by a rupture with the Prime Minister. If the Prime Minister is supported by the House of Commons, and the House of Commons is supported by those who vote in the election of representatives to sit in that House, the King must either give way or abdicate. When he is a man of strong mind, his opinion is in a very high sense respected by the Prime Minister ; and in particular his wishes and doubts have great weight in important questions of foreign policy, which are considered and half settled by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs before they are submitted to the whole Cabinet. George III., though afflicted with intermittent madness, continued to be for the first fifty years of his reign a man of such force of character as to be sincerely respected by the British people, and by the holders of political offices, whether permanent or temporary. It may be said, though it cannot be formally proved, that his

character was one of the forces which shaped the character of his people ; and for the second, if not for the first half of his reign, he was as honest and plain-dealing as his politicians and his traders.

For four whole years before the commencement of the year 1815 he had been incapable of taking any part in business or in ceremonies. His heir-apparent, who signed State papers as Regent, was not a man of sound character. As artists use a lay figure to throw into this or that posture, and to hang this or that cloth upon, so did the rulers of England employ George, the Prince Regent ; and when visited by real kings in the summer of 1814, he would have been thought a satisfactory representative of the English aristocracy, had he not been seen driving to his house in unseemly haste to escape from the hisses of the Londoners.

The real head of the Government was Lord Liverpool. He was forty-five years old ; he had been in Mr. Pitt's Cabinet at the age of thirty-one as Foreign Secretary ; he had been First Lord of the Treasury, or Prime Minister, for three years. He was a patient and discreet man, more fit for power than many men then alive whose intellects were more brilliant. He knew how far he must defer to men of genius, and he was not too proud to learn new lessons in politics ; but he betrayed no fear of orators, and he behaved as if he knew that eloquence, if it was to rule Britons, must be the outward sign of character. He courted neither the Prince nor the populace. By the conscientious exercise of authority he did as much

as any of his successors, and more than any of his predecessors, to make statecraft acceptable to virtuous citizens. His tenure of power lasted fourteen years without a break ; it gave the nation time to choose between the more and the less trustworthy advocates of liberal principles.

Next to Lord Liverpool stood Lord Castlereagh. Though called by the title of lord, he was not a member of the House of Lords. He was in the House of Commons, and was its leader ; that is to say, he initiated and controlled the proceedings of the majority of the Commons, in the name and with the full authority of the Government, and he was in all debates on international proceedings the defender of the Cabinet against the Opposition. He had been the strenuous, and not over scrupulous agent of Mr. Pitt in bringing about the Union with Ireland ; and he was avowedly under a pledge to the Irish Catholics, which was to be redeemed if he ever had the opportunity. In the year 1809 he had been responsible for the conduct of the greatest armament that ever left the coast of Britain ; and his appointment of Mr. Pitt's surviving brother to the command of that force had caused the failure of a good scheme. The nation, however, had proved more indulgent than free nations used to be ; perhaps because the reason of the miscarriage was at once explored, and the lofty aristocrat gave account of his actions with the unaffected frankness of an honest patriot.

He was the only politician of Irish birth that was not skilful in oratory, and yet a great Member of

Parliament. His speaking was clumsy, yet he never said, in the way of threat or promise, either more or less than he meant to say, or his colleagues meant to have said through him. He encountered with the simplest audacity the most versatile and showy rhetoricians ; and he was treated with high respect by the wisest of his opponents, Sir James Mackintosh. He was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs during three years of military success, which rewarded him for all past disappointments, and he was the first Foreign Secretary that ever left England to conduct affairs on the Continent. Though perhaps the least intellectual, he was the most dignified and courageous of all those personages, whether emperors or ministers, who invaded France in 1814 with the allied armies of Eastern and Northern Europe ; and at the last crisis of the campaign, when the others were bewildered and dismayed, he compelled them in spite of etiquette to take troops from Bernadotte, King of Sweden, and give them to Blücher, the Prussian general, that he might prevail in the final combat of Laon. It may be safely conjectured, that if Castlereagh had been a professional soldier, he would have done as well as any English general, save one.¹

The English general who stood first without a rival was the Duke of Wellington. He was probably the greatest man that ever was sincerely content to serve. During his fifty years of conspicuous public life he accepted every opportunity of serving the State as naturally as a horse takes food, and he conformed to

¹ Lord Castlereagh, in the last few years of his life, by inheritance became a Peer, and was called Marquis of Londonderry.

all law and all social obligation just as if he had no self-love. He never set up for a statesman, but in giving counsel and in getting things done he surpassed those Englishmen and those foreigners who made it their business to frame and execute a policy. If he had been enthusiastic, he could not have been more daring ; if he had been trained in philosophy, he could hardly have been more judicious. So far from being an enthusiast or a philosopher, he was substantially a man of pleasure, and he was not without hardness of heart. It cost him no effort to be perfectly truthful, although he could not always so completely rule his tongue or his pen as not to scold or scoff a little more than he intended. Though not a professor of friendship, he was attached to his like-minded master in politics, Lord Castlereagh ; and when the meeting of Parliament compelled the First Commoner to go home, he took his place at Vienna just as one partner succeeds another in trading.

For sitting in council with the envoys, and for holding interviews with those monarchs who interfered with the envoys of the great Powers, the Duke of Wellington had one special qualification which no one else, not even Lord Castlereagh, could share : he was the friend of France. Once when he went to a French theatre he was applauded ; a French lady was rebuked for clapping her hands by a fellow-countryman, who said to her : ‘ Don’t you know that he has always beaten us ? ’ and she answered, ‘ Yes ; but he has always beaten us like a gentleman.’ He had refused to take advantage of traitorous intrigue

when French malcontents offered help against Soult, their leader. He had sent home his froward allies when they plundered French villages. He had compelled, with gentle reasoning, the son of the Bourbon who claimed the French crown to desist from premature rebellion against the provisional government which came between Napoleon and Louis. He was well acquainted with this Louis, the first Frenchman that ever understood English institutions ; and he was on terms of friendship, not of entangling intimacy, with M. Talleyrand, the inimitably clever representative of the new French monarchy.

A hundred years had passed since England and France had pulled together ; then, as in 1815, the bigger nation had been worsted mainly by the combinations of an English warrior, and had in its comparative weakness followed the guidance of the English aristocracy ruling in the name of a Hanoverian George. In 1815 the beaten nation disguised its defeat under a change of dynasty, and being blessed with sagacious liberal leaders, was able to give effective support to the liberal policy of its most honoured rival ; for the Lords Castlereagh and Wellington, although they belonged to the party which repressed democracy at home, were the advocates of liberal principles at Vienna.

It was their duty to restore the old governments overthrown by Napoleon, but not to reconstruct without modifying the absolute monarchies which had before the French Revolution disposed at will of the fortunes of Europe. Not that they insisted on a con-

stitution or a charter for every people : far from it ; they approved of a compact between Louis XVIII. and the French, but they did not care for the unstable Cortes of Spain. They admired old-fashioned Monarchy as being generally the safeguard against Jacobins or levellers ; but they wished every king, whether bound by a compact or not, to be moderate and righteous. They had resisted Napoleon because he was worse than a Jacobin in fraud and violence ; in an earlier age they would have cried out against the three sovereigns who in the spirit of Napoleon parcelled out Poland as their spoil. A certain amount of punishment they would inflict, or allow to be inflicted, on Napoleon's tributaries, but more as a warning than for revenge, and in the spirit of prudence rather than of reaction. They were deferential enough to crowned heads ; but they seldom, if ever, forgot that they were accountable to an aristocratic Parliament charged with ancestral thoughts of equity and generosity.

Since the nations of Russia and Prussia had not by their sufferings earned a right to be consulted by their lords, there was no home influence to check the two potentates of the North-East in resuming the evil designs of their unjust predecessors. They tried to settle their own affairs without regard to the quickened conscience and enlarged wisdom of educated Europeans. Russia was to take almost all Poland, and Prussia the whole of Saxony. The utter destruction of Saxony seemed to others too great a punishment for siding with France ; and as the Saxons had deserted Napoleon at the critical battle of Leipzig,

they were viewed with some charity by the Austrians, who a few months earlier had done the same. Austria therefore protested against this arrangement, and was backed by England. There would have been, it is thought, a deadlock and a rupture, had not Talleyrand turned the scale against the two potentates.

Thus did France at once recover her position as the equal of the four allied States ; and she continued to act in harmony with the two champions of moderation. There was no other dispute of equal importance with this ; and when Russia, already enlarged at the expense of Sweden and Turkey, was forced to be content with part only of Poland, Prussia, taking other parts of Poland, and such bits of Saxony as rounded her estate on the Elbe, was with general consent strengthened on the Rhine to make head against any future Bonaparte, and was still further consolidated by bartering and haggling with Sweden on the Baltic coast. Provided nothing was done quite so violent as the extinction of Saxony, the English rulers acquiesced in many little adjustments made by the Germans and the Scandinavians, which need not here be described. One, however, of these arrangements deserves notice.

Norway became, with the tacit approval of the victorious monarchs, a perfect democracy ; for when severed from the absolute kingdom of Denmark, to punish the Danes for being faithful to France, it was not incorporated with its neighbour Sweden, although nominally subjected to the King of Sweden ; it has ever since the release from Denmark enjoyed the firm

establishment of a democratic Republic, with titular monarchy as an ornamental coping-stone.

The diplomatists who sanctioned the linking of Norway with Sweden intended to reward the French soldier who then ruled Sweden for helping to subdue Napoleon ; they were not far from having to aid him in subduing the Norwegians ; they acquiesced in the bargain struck between him and his new set of subjects. Since the brief conflict which preceded the settlement, the two kingdoms of Scandinavia, though differing in constitution, have had no disputes about the choice of a king, and have had no occasion for using their several armies and fleets.

To the ancient and glorious confederation of Swiss Republics the Allies gave back what France had taken away ; and since 1815 its soil has not been insulted by strangers in arms.

The Venetian Republic, which had fallen through the decay of civic virtue, and had been given to Austria by France in 1797, was thought unworthy of revival ; and the confirmation of the gift as an enlargement of her old domain in North Italy and on the shores of the Adriatic was but a set-off to the voluntary concessions made elsewhere by Austria.

But there was yet another Republic whose fate was not quite so easy to settle ; nor could it be merged in a kingdom without a solemn appeal from the Congress of Vienna to the only High Court in which a case could be argued in the hearing of Europe, the British Parliament. This case requires attention, since it shows that England was even then regarded

as a nation with a lively conscience. The city of Genoa, once famous for commercial enterprise and armed colonies in the Levant and in the Black Sea, had in the eighteenth century borrowed money of a French king, and to pay her debt had parted with the island of Corsica. That was the first time that a people rebelled against being treated like the cattle of a mortgaged farm; and the Corsicans were in their fruitless resistance applauded, if not aided, by the educated gentlemen of England: an incident here mentioned to account for the imperfect sympathy of Englishmen with the Genoese.

During the struggle with Napoleon, Sicily had been rescued and defended by English forces. When the time came for encircling the tyrant with armies, Lord William Bentinck, an enlightened soldier, came from Sicily with a few thousands of his garrison, and marched from Leghorn to Genoa, summoning all Italians to join in throwing off the yoke. He went beyond his instructions in promising to restore the old liberties of Genoa; and when he took the city he was not able to save it from being annexed to the neighbouring kingdom of Sardinia. So the citizens had to wait, like all the rest of Italy, for the liberty that was to ripen in the coming generations.¹

If Bentinck was imprudent, if Bentinck's masters were unjust, such censure as was due came, as censure always comes on England, from her own writers and

¹ The island Sardinia gave a title, then a century old, to a monarch who held under more ancient titles the Subalpine regions called Piedmont and Savoy.

speakers. The cause of the Italian city was pleaded by Sir James Mackintosh with a calm authoritative statement of facts and principles, which may even now serve orators as a model. The grant of a seaport to Piedmont was well meant, and turned out well for Italy. The modern Genoese may be glad that British arms set them free from the stranger, and that the protest made against the subsequent annexation was equivalent to a eulogy spoken over the grave of their municipality.

There was yet another state which England was bound to treat with generosity, and to guard from the encroachments of great monarchs—her neighbour and old rival, Holland. The Dutch had been by Mr. Pitt's skilful policy saved from the undue interference of the French Government before the Revolution. But they had been after that Revolution drawn into the whirlpool of Jacobin excitement. Their consequent subservience to France cost them dear; for they had to give up some, not all, of their trifling possessions in India, the better part of their sugar plantations in South America, all that they held in the rich island of Ceylon, of which the conquest was then incomplete, and that part of South Africa which took its name from the Cape of Good Hope. All this they lost in the long war, and transferred by the treaty of peace to England. Men who remembered how they had helped England to shake off a traitorous king and to contend against Louis XIV. might well be pained at this dismemberment of a grand Colonial Empire: for it looked as if evil were returned for good.

But what the Dutch ceded was by no means all that England had won and might have kept. In the seas between India and China, armaments sent from British India had conquered most of the Dutch settlements, and these were of more actual value, not to speak of potential value, than all else that the Dutch had held outside Europe. Java, in particular, which had been considerably improved by the English during their tenure, was given back freely, and was by itself enough to make Holland stronger in colonial power than France or Portugal. The island of Banca, the only region which vied with England in the production of tin, was given back with Java ; and beside these there were clusters of islands left to the Dutch sufficient for many swarmings of adventurers ; and yet England continued to hold the little island of Singapore in the neighbourhood of the Dutch, and there to set an example of commercial hospitality. But the State to which these dependencies were restored was no longer the Holland of seven provinces which had been in old times reckoned with England as a maritime Power. It was now, by the special wish and design of English statesmen, the Kingdom of the Netherlands ; not seven but seventeen provinces.

The augmentation was effected, for the good of Europe, at the expense of the Austrian Emperor, who might have resumed the ten States ceded to France in 1797. These States, sometimes called the Walloon Netherlands, seemed to the politicians and to the strategists of the day fit for union with the seven Dutch Provinces. The ten were to bring into

partnership the city of Antwerp, recently fortified and turned into a naval arsenal by the French, who had held all the Netherlands as part of Napoleon's empire. It was Antwerp which Lord Castlereagh had, in 1809, instructed Lord Chatham to dismantle : for its dock-yard was Napoleon's favourite weapon, or at least his menace against England. The Duke of Wellington insisted on its being delivered to the new kingdom inviolate : so free was he from petty jealousy. Moreover, he took great pains personally to survey the frontier of the Netherlands on the side of France, and to lay out a plan for securing the new State against invasion by a system of fortresses. For it was thought that ten millions of Prussians, with a good frontier on the Lower Moselle, were not enough to stem the French flood, unless their right flank was guarded by a considerable and well-armed kingdom. Unfortunately, no one asked whether this new bulwark would in its turn be flanked at the time of need by the maritime Power on its right, a Power so excessively maritime as to be hardly capable of carrying on operations by land.

The formation of this kingdom of the Netherlands, described by some French writers as a purely selfish scheme devised for the advantage of England, was in fact a contrivance of disinterested and single-minded Englishmen for the maintenance of peace against the ambition of the French ; and it was agreed upon by the public council of Europe on the same principle as the simultaneous enlargement of Western or Rhenish Prussia. In both cases the politicians disregarded a certain cause of imperfect

cohesion, religious antipathy. It was held that religious concord was not necessary for the subsistence of a State : the Swiss Confederation included Catholics and Protestants. Experience has since proved that the Catholics of the Rhine can be fellow subjects of Prussia with the Protestants of the Elbe ; nor can the Vienna statesmen be blamed for expecting the Catholics of the ten southern provinces to live under the Orange dynasty of Holland with the Protestants of the seven northern provinces. The scheme failed, but it was a good scheme.

The French writers who have misinterpreted this arrangement, have also noticed in the same spirit an unimportant addition made to the little kingdom of Hanover, which was, on the east, the neighbour of Holland. They have spoken of it as a favour granted to England. In point of fact, the British people had hardly anything to do with it. It so happened that the king, heretofore called the Elector of Hanover, was George III., King of the United Kingdom ; and his Hanoverian subjects had supplied the best troopers for the composite army led by the Duke of Wellington. The tie between England and Hanover was to be snapt whenever England had a Queen instead of a King : a contingency which no British citizens deprecated. As long as the tie remained, that is to say, from 1714 to 1837, it was thought by Britons an encumbrance ; and yet it may be now held to have been on the whole beneficial to both countries, inasmuch as it enabled the military men of England and Hanover to teach and to respect one another, notwith-

standing the difference of the two languages. It somewhat diminished the insulation of the Teutonic people dominant in Britain ; and it opened a field of enterprise to some of the Teutonic¹ people of the Continent. But when the first King of Hanover received a slice of territory as an indemnity for what he had suffered from France and from Prussia during the long war, his British subjects were nearly as unconscious of the change as he was himself.

There was, and in spite of the erosive action of the sea there still is, near Hanover, and near Hamburg, the chief port of Germany, an islet called Heligoland. At that time it was reckoned as part of the territory belonging to the King of Denmark. The Danes have been the bravest and the most unlucky of nations. They had in the seventeenth century delivered themselves from an oppressive aristocracy by deliberately constituting an absolute monarchy ; their courtiers had in the nineteenth century chosen badly for them in siding with France against their kinsfolk, the British people. A policy of romantic generosity, such as could not be expected of the Lords Liverpool, Castlereagh, and Wellington, would have guided another kind of Englishmen towards the healing of Denmark's wounds. It was not worth while, after parting Denmark from Norway, to take from it a few acres. But these few acres had been for two or three years paved and heaped with bales of English goods waiting to be put on board boats and landed on the coasts of the North Sea in defiance of

¹ Teutonic, i.e. Germanic.

the French custom-houses. So Heligoland had for the time a singular value as a storehouse for merchants. It was conceivable that it might again be wanted to help the British traders in breaking the blockade of the Elbe. It was ceded by the King of Denmark, not to Hanover but to England. The result was, that after the separation of the Hanoverian and English dynasties, England remained in possession of a fragment of the German Empire, a relic rather than a trophy, a bone of contention for coming generations rather than a serviceable outwork.¹

In the retention of Malta by England, which was really a matter of great importance, the rest of Europe cheerfully acquiesced ; perhaps with more readiness because she abandoned for ever what she had tried to hold through former wars, the Spanish island of Minorca. She wanted one good naval station in the Mediterranean Sea, in which it was her purpose to keep that footing which she had taken in Cromwell's brilliant reign. The harbour of La Valetta, in Malta, was admirably secured by nature and art, and most conveniently situated. It could be appropriated to the great maritime power without offence given to any nation ; for it had belonged, not to a nation but to a company of gentlemen gathered from many nations, called the Knights of St. John, or the Knights of Malta. Bent as men were on 'regilding rags and shards,' they did not go so far as to insist on restoring this military company. The knights had long ago ceased to do

¹ Heligoland was an appendage of Holstein. The King of Denmark was Duke of Holstein, which was separable from Denmark.

their old duty : they were neither able nor willing to check the Turks, or to chastise the piratical States of North Africa. They had politely given up their stronghold to Bonaparte ; and they were not in a position to claim it from the lieutenants of Admiral Nelson, who won it by blockade from a French garrison. An occupation by imperfect right, maintained for about fifteen years, was now made by the public law of Europe indisputable ; and the Maltese, with their Arabic language and their Roman Catholic Church, have continued for sixty years to enjoy all the advantages, and to escape all the burdens, of British subjects.

Within a day's sail of Malta lies the magnificent island of Sicily. This was the only great region of middle Europe which had entirely escaped from Napoleon. It had been garrisoned by Englishmen, and used as a base of operations for troops sent to Spain and to Italy. It had also been for the time emancipated in some measure from the bad rule of its own courtiers and priests. It was now restored to Naples, and placed under the tutelage of Austria, a grievous but inevitable arrangement.

The higher classes in Sicily were too much pleased with themselves, the others too superstitious and too lawless, to derive much benefit from contact with the goodness of such an Englishman as Lord William Bentinck ; and his tenure of power was too short and imperfect ; but he had at least given the Sicilians a vision of modern virtue ; and his diplomatic successor, Sir William A'Court, in disappointing their political

hopes stirred them with a wholesome resentment. They had long ago had kings called William, one good, another wicked : the two Englishmen got the benefit of the distinguishing names. This discernment was, for Sicily, a step in political education.

It was not perceived in 1815 that the day of renovation was drawing near for the nation of the Greeks, or, as they called themselves, the Hellenes, which had given the earliest and best lessons of political liberty. But, in compliance with the wish of her allies, England accepted—consciously as a protector and sovereign, unconsciously as a trustee for the Hellenic people—the seven islands of the Southern Adriatic, commonly called the Ionian Islands, of which she had by force of arms dispossessed the French Empire. Of these seven there was one called Ithaca, dear to Europe for the sake of the first European poet, a Greek. It must seem strange to other races of men, that a book written by a Greek some twenty-five centuries ago could affect the counsels of statesmen. But this can be understood when it is perceived that Europe is governed entirely by gentlemen, that gentlemen are imbued with literature, and that the literature which affects similarly, if not equally, the cultivated minds of all European nations is not written in the language now spoken by any of them, but in the earlier forms of languages spoken in Italy and Greece. And all this ancient literature can be traced back to verses composed by Homer, the earliest of Greek poets. The island, then, which

Homer made famous was not allowed to pass under the degrading tyranny of the Turks. It might have been assigned to Austria, as the mistress of the Adriatic and the heiress of Venice : for Venice had held the Greek islands of the Adriatic. But Austria was not a maritime Power, nor was she to be relied on for keeping out of these waters the suspected squadrons of Russia. Accordingly, it was to England, the one nation that was felt to be disinterested and faithful, that the Homeric rocks were entrusted. One of these islands, Corfu, contained a harbour so fortified as to be a valuable naval station. On this honourable possession the trusted nation entered with the simple intention of administering the trust ; and this duty was so fulfilled that Corfu to this day shows gratitude to English visitors.

In establishing naval stations, whether in the German Sea or the Mediterranean, or the oceans far from Europe, it must be borne in mind that England was doing what was best for the whole world. For she closed no port against foreigners. Free trade, in the modern sense, was not then in vogue. But an old dispute about ' free sea ' and ' close sea,' in which the Spaniards and the Dutch had obstinately maintained the narrow and exclusive policy, was by England settled in favour of hospitality and commerce. All her ports, all over the world, were police stations for the suppression of piracy, refuges for the ships of every flag, havens of refreshment for the expeditions of friendly belligerents, and trading places for all kinds of peaceful adventurers. When she took

final possession, in 1815, of islands such as Mauritius in the sea between India and Africa, or Trinidad, St. Lucie and Tobago among the Antilles of America, she was no doubt following out, in the first instance, the old policy of providing for her own manufacturers new and sure markets, but she was at the same time enlarging the area of liberal administration. Nor did she then or since then establish any settlement that was not available for Americans, Germans, Jews, Chinese, Malays, or any other enterprising and migratory people. Her uniform jurisdiction was so attractive, that Spanish shopkeepers came to live in the fragment of Spain severed by military occupancy from their beloved country: their religion was respected, and their children born in Gibraltar grew up to the advantage of being British subjects, entitled to the protection of the supreme maritime nation wherever they chose to trade. Every sugar island won in the war was delivered from the baneful influence of mankind's enemies, the sellers of African slaves. The traffic in human bodies was prohibited in all British dependencies by a law passed eight years before. And now the great Peace Congress gave a chance of drawing other nations of Europe into similar legislation. This opportunity was not thrown away by the straightforward men of business who were employed by England.

It is to be remarked that the Lords Castlereagh and Wellington were very far from being by temperament or training the sort of men that might have been expected to make so great an innovation as to

plead for African negroes. In thus pleading they complied honestly, but not enthusiastically, with the demands of their Parliament, expressed through the Cabinet which represented Parliament. They were not professors of philanthropy, nor even of evangelical doctrine, but they were the ultimate exponents of philanthropic doctrine founded mainly on the Christian religion. In an age of astonishing manufactures and eager trade, which was also an age of oratory, of literature, and of social splendour, the British people had slowly yielded to a grand assault made on its conscience.

Mr. Wilberforce, who entered public life with Mr. Pitt, had in early manhood conceived Christianity to be a rule of action for public men, transcending the obligations of a patriot and modifying the counsels of a legislator. In the sacred writings of the Christians was found a statement that all men were of one blood. From this it was inferred that no kind of men could be rightly turned into chattels. Slavery, based on outward signs of inferiority, was forbidden. Debt or crime might justify bondage, but only the bondage of debtors or criminals, not of their offspring. Hereditary bondage was pronounced to be a thing against nature. Positive law might justify enforced labour in particular cases, but not the general treatment of inferior families as if they were brute beasts. The new gospel then should have demanded the liberation of all purchased and home-bred slaves. Was this what the British ministers at Vienna were instructed to ask for? Was this what Mr. Wilberforce had

persuaded Mr. Fox to enact in Parliament ? No ; it had been found necessary to be content for the present with much less. The Christians had not been so unpractical as to try in that age to persuade men of business that they must give up slavery. With the wisdom of men gifted with high and ranging imagination, Mr. Wilberforce and his friends had year after year striven to make men ashamed of the more revolting features of modern slavery ; leaving for the time unassailed the employment of home-bred slaves, they had forced all Europeans to see and know how dreadful and loathsome was the traffic in Africans brought from their homes by man-hunters to the coast, and shipped for America by unscrupulous traders. This detestable traffic was not even economical. For the negroes thrived in the tropical regions of America ; and if treated well and encouraged to rear their children, they were sure to keep up the stock and to multiply without any immigration. The experience of such English colonies as Jamaica and Barbadoes, which ever since the year 1807 had been effectually forbidden to import Africans, was in 1815 sufficient proof, that importation of Africans was not necessary for the prosperity of sugar-lands ; so that the views of the philanthropists could now be set forth with advantage.

The advocacy of any philanthropic theory in a congress of princes and diplomatists was in itself a brilliant and interesting novelty. It implied an attempt to turn the floating 'law of nature,' which was only a set of maxims collected and reiterated by

ethical writers, into 'public law' capable of being, like positive law in general, enforced by sovereign authority. This public law was to be enacted by the signatories of the great Treaty, who in the first instance settled boundaries and decided on the legitimacy of governments. Thus enacted by the eight (virtually by the five) leading States of Europe, the law condemning the slave-trade was to be enforced by the armed ships of the maritime States of Europe, acting for the whole confederation.

This conception was acceptable to the Emperor of Russia. Whilst he had no sugar-islands, and therefore no need for African labourers, and consequently ran no risk of hurting his subjects, so that he could safely indulge himself in echoing the cries of the indignant Abolitionists, he held on his own account a lofty and sweeping creed of Christian policy, which, if embodied in the judgments of the European Confederation, would tend to the suppression of war and tumult, and to the extirpation of great sins. He made, and he induced the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria to make, a profession of Christian zeal and orthodoxy which covered much more than the abolition of the slave-trade.

These two potentates who followed the Czar's lead were, like the Czar, the rulers of States which possessed no colonies, and seldom displayed their flags in the oceans plagued by slave-traders. It was therefore very easy to obtain the assent of these three Eastern—generally called, without good reason, *Northern*—Powers to the declaration against the

trade which desolated Africa, and was repugnant to the moral sentiment of enlightened Europeans. But the three Western nations of France, Spain, and Portugal, all having possessions in America which, it was thought, could not prosper without a constant supply of African labourers, were far less likely to yield to the ethical reform called Abolition. Although the leading politicians might agree more or less with the friends of the negroes, imbued as they were with a literature which for thirty years had proclaimed the doctrine of humanity, there was not, there could not be, in any of these three countries a strong public opinion against a kind of commerce which seemed indispensable.

The teaching of Rousseau and of Raynal, though in vogue before the Revolution of 1789, had not sunk deep into the hearts of any people except the people which had combated the Revolution, the people of Great Britain. Yet the arms of Great Britain, borne with honour from Lisbon and Cadiz to Thoulouse and Bordeaux, had established an undeniable claim; and neither Spain nor Portugal, nor the King of France, was so openly ungrateful to the liberating warriors as to refuse acquiescence in their strange and romantic championship of Africa. The 750,000 Britons who signed a petition to their rulers, praying that immediate abolition of the sinful traffic should be one of the results of the great war, obtained through their faithful agents, not indeed what they thought adequate, but a downright condemnation of the practice, and an encouraging promise of amendment.

It must be remembered that these negotiations, begun at Paris in the summer of 1814, were not concluded when the next spring came. The conclusion was precipitated by one who was not consulted at Vienna. For Bonaparte, on seizing the Government of France in 1815, tried to make himself popular with the liberals by ordering the immediate cessation of the slave trade—a measure which he could not have enforced so effectually as he imagined. He thus outbid his rival, Louis, who had promised to stop the trade at the end of five years ; and it was adroitly contrived by the English that this edict, which might have been treated like other edicts then issued by Bonaparte, should be quoted like a judicial decision, in arguing with the ministers of the restored king. It was, said they, dangerous for Louis to be less liberal and less humane than Bonaparte.¹

It has been pointed out that the moral sentiment, which in an unprecedented manner influenced the British envoys at Vienna, and guided them in persuading all Europe to rescue the injured tribes of Africa, was substantially due to the Christian religion. It is necessary to add that the form of Christianity which obtained this signal triumph over avarice and indolence was the Protestant or Evangelical form : the same creed as that which had supported

¹ More often called Napoleon ; but Napoleon is the name which he took when by the consent of the French he became their Emperor ; when deprived of power with their assent he ought to be called, like other people, by his family name : he became General Bonaparte, and Englishmen who approve of his dethronement approve also of his enforced resumption of this name : it was one of his grievances when in captivity.

the combatants for political freedom in the United States of Holland, in the rival but convergent nations of England and Scotland, in Sweden, and in the United States of North America. This creed, erroneously called negative, was and is based on the recognition of certain parts of the Jewish literature, particularly of the later Jewish literature, called the New Testament, as containing the direct commands of the Creator.

The Protestants of Great Britain, like all other Protestants, thought that it was derogatory to the sovereignty of Him who had spoken to them in these books, to obey the man who called himself the sacred representative of the Deity, resident at Rome. But if the Pope of Rome was, as he had almost always been for many generations, a priest of exemplary life, he was by enlightened Protestants, and consequently by all Protestants entrusted with government, respected, and, in proportion to his merits, admired. The Pope who had lived at Rome during the tyranny of Bonaparte was a good man ; and he was by the tyrant scandalously injured. Accordingly, it was with the full consent and sympathy of Englishmen that he was replaced, under the protection of the nearest great Power, Austria, in the absolute government of Rome and of Central Italy. He was considered a legitimate, though not an hereditary sovereign. Legitimate rulers were, it was thought, entitled to restitution of all that they had lost, unless they had joined Napoleon and remained a little too long in his alliance ; and the Pope had, in the judgment of laymen, done nothing

unworthy of his high position. His minister, Consalvi, was so wise and good that the States of the Church came back trustfully under the priestly yoke ; and the re-establishment of the most anomalous of all governments was witnessed approvingly, as the undoing of wrong, by the nation which had bound itself by law never to send an ambassador to reside at the Court of Rome.

For in the main the British people desired that justice should be done ; and did not then perceive that justice to an individual might involve the stifling of a community.

The action of England in the settlement of Europe and its dependencies may be thus summed up. She consented, with more or less approval, to the augmentation of Russia and of Prussia, being unable to reconstitute Poland, or to preserve for Sweden her ancient ascendancy in the Baltic. She concurred in the establishment of a German confederation, in which her king figured as King of Hanover, alongside of other third-rate monarchs and in subordination to the two principal German monarchies, Prussia and Austria. She became, by the occupation of Gibraltar, Malta, and Corfu, a power of wide range and primary influence in the Mediterranean, allowing the central country of the Mediterranean, Italy, with her two small monarchies Sardinia or Piedmont, and Naples or the two Sicilies, and the elective monarchy called the Papacy, to be under the dominant control of Austria. She acquiesced cheerfully in the annexation of Venice with most of her old territories to Lombardy

or the Milanese, which was the ancient and legitimate property of Austria. Thus far she failed to satisfy the wishes of her own, and of many continental liberals ; yet it is nearly certain that, had she been at the time governed by the followers of the great liberal Mr. Fox, she could not have materially improved upon these arrangements.

The rest of her action can be defended on liberal principles. She did well, though subsequent changes frustrated the scheme, in supporting without intrusive patronage the restored kings of Spain and France, who accepted power under new conditions favourable to the liberty of their subjects. She did well in setting upon a new footing the monarchy of the Netherlands, raised to the rank of a State equal to what Prussia had been, garnished with a sufficient though lessened set of colonial dependencies, and fortified by English skill and English money for bridling a French aggressor. By setting on or near the French frontier three formidable states, Austria, Prussia and the Netherlands, she did what was best for the preservation of peace or the maintenance of the balance of power ; nor was anything done for the holy cause of peace so praiseworthy as her respectful and tender behaviour towards her great antagonist the people of France.

For herself she took nothing that was grudged by others, scarcely anything that was not granted with hearty consent, some things that were almost thrust upon her. There was but one object for which she had to make a sustained effort and to contend against

dulness and insincerity, and this was the deliverance of Africa.

It may be too much to say of her that she was at this epoch either 'the arbitress of Europe,' or 'the tutelary angel of the human race,' or 'the august mother of free nations;' but it is not too much to say that her policy was more generous and considerate than the policy of any military and victorious nation ever known. This also must be said: she acted with the strength of an united people. For although her parliament contained parties more sharply divided than in other generations before or since, her envoys served her not as mere men of the world, or as courtiers, or even as Tories: they did the bidding of ministers, who were themselves instructed by political philosophers excluded from office, and by religious citizens indifferent to Court favour.¹

II.

THE deliberations which were held at Vienna, and ended in the settlement of claims and limits, were interrupted in the spring of 1815 by a quick and startling change in the government of France. Louis, the Bourbon king, after a year's prudent and skilful management of affairs, was for about four months dethroned by Bonaparte. This period is called by

¹ 'Arbitress of Europe.'—Burke. 'Tutelary angel of the human race.'—Burke. 'The august mother of free nations.'—Bright.

French writers the Hundred Days. Englishmen remember it as the Waterloo Campaign.

The English Government had wisely refused to reduce the force maintained in the British islands for defence: and the Americans had fortunately protracted their negotiations for peace so long that England was not disarmed by land or by sea when the French war had to be renewed. Earl Grey, the leader of Mr. Fox's party, who had six years before misunderstood the strategy and prospects of Wellington in the Spanish Peninsula, fell into a second error of judgment. It was part of the lesson learnt by him from his old master, to look on all kinds of French government with trustfulness. He did not perceive that there was one kind of French government that could not be trusted—the tyranny of Bonaparte. He argued with his ally Lord Grenville, the cousin and disciple of Mr. Pitt, and the leader of a small but conspicuous section of politicians. He tried, but failed, to persuade him that the armed usurper was entitled to a fair trial, just as if he had been chosen by the citizens. Lord Grenville agreed with Lord Liverpool and almost all competent judges, in considering the restoration of Bonaparte as the transitory and baseless effect of a plot and of a mutiny. The Tories, who had won the confidence of the nation by steadfastness in the late war, now turned on their vexatious foe, as a man stamps on a serpent which seemed dead but bites again. He was, said a lawyer, either a subject of the King of France in rebellion, or an enemy of all mankind deprived by

his own faithlessness of all legal rights. It was the second alternative that the English nation acted on. The Whigs, who thought otherwise, weakened themselves by their error of judgment.

The British fleet in the Mediterranean, though small, was strong enough to play once more a leading part in the deliverance of Italy and of Southern France from the enemies of the Bourbons and of the Austrians.

No time was lost in fetching home from Canada and from the Gulf of Mexico some famous regiments of infantry, which had not increased their renown in the basin of the St. Lawrence or on the left bank of the Mississippi. But it took three months to bring them to Flanders, and Bonaparte did not give them time for this change of scene. He struck at the Peninsular general when still looking for the remnant of the Peninsular army.

He led a host as numerous as can be commanded effectually by one man ; and it was in a great measure composed of full-grown men, the survivors of his dreadful massacres, men who when captive and wounded seemed to a good judge of bodily prowess dreadful and indomitable.¹ He brought these made

¹ 'I have just returned from seeing the French wounded received in their hospital ; and could you see them laid out—naked or almost so, a hundred on a row of low beds on the ground—though wounded, exhausted, beaten, you would still conclude with me that these were men capable of marching unopposed from the West of Europe to the East of Asia. Strong, thick-set, hardy veterans, brave spirits and unsubdued, as they cast their wild glance upon you,' &c.—(From a letter written by Sir Charles Bell, surgeon and philosopher, printed in Lockhart's 'Life of Scott,' vol. iii. ch. xi.)

soldiers, glowing with the first rapture of vows renewed to him, and with the hope of vengeance for three years of defeat, to trample down the seven and twenty battalions made up for the most part of rustic striplings who did duty for the British infantry.¹ These few battalions were flanked and backed by forty-eight squadrons of British horsemen; this was proportionally a strong body of cavalry: horses had not been sent to America. The third arm was relatively strong; the fieldpieces, worked by skilled gunners, were, for an English army, numerous; and their range and precision, though not great, were sufficient. This little force was equivalent to what has been called a *corps d'armée* in recent wars; such a force as would be in a Continental army entrusted to a secondary general. But it was about the size of the British army that had ventured on the Continent in former wars.²

¹ Of these battalions only five numbered a thousand men each, one contained less than five hundred bayonets. It appears that a regiment, represented by a battalion, retains its integrity and character, if it fronts the enemy with as many as four hundred bayonets arrayed in two lines. The 42nd Regiment, or Black Watch, began the campaign with five hundred and twenty-six bayonets; on June 16, lost two hundred and ninety-six men of all ranks, but took its place in the front line on the 18th as a regiment. But the word 'loss' is a technical term, it comprises all who report their wounds; of these there are some who go back to battle very quickly.

² The English give the name of regiment to a body of cavalry of three hundred or less sabres. The French writers about Waterloo dwell complacently on the destruction of a Scottish regiment of horse, which at the beginning of the campaign numbered three hundred sabres; this regiment had two-thirds of its horses and one-third of its men killed on June 18. There was only one British cavalry regiment at Waterloo that numbered at the opening of the campaign about six hundred men of all ranks.

As in Marlborough's first great victory, and as in Wellington's best exploit, the battle of Salamanca, it was relatively strong in cavalry ; so that Wellington was not too bold in choosing for his field an open slope, up and down which horsemen could move freely. But it would have been rash for any leader less known and honoured to line the crest of such a slope with such infantry as his. For although he brought into the field about seventy thousand men, that is to say, as many as he had ever led in Spain, he had but a few thousand German mercenaries and allies under him whom he could rely upon to fight as well as his own people ; and his second line had to be formed of Netherlanders, who were either untrained or of doubtful loyalty. He had made up his mind to fight on ground chosen by himself, in front of a village called Waterloo, which was half a day's march from Brussels. His good allies, the Prussians, were bent upon meeting the foe nearer the French border. Therefore he found himself obliged to fight at a place that did not interest him as a battlefield, a day's march from Waterloo, twenty miles from Brussels. At this place he fought as it were for form's sake, not trying hard to win, and knowing full well that the Prussians could not be enabled to win, but not troubling himself to tell them so. In this preliminary battle he did without cavalry, although the ground favoured the action of horsemen, and he let his best infantry come into action piecemeal and rather tardily. He gave far too much power to a foolish personage whose only claim to lieutenancy in the

allied army was that he was called Prince of Orange ; this blunderer caused an English regiment to lose one of its flags, a thing which very seldom happens in combat. Nothing but the mental inferiority of Bonaparte's lieutenant, Ney, and Bonaparte's own slackness, saved Wellington from disaster. This battle of Quatre Bras, fought on June 16, did great honour to General Picton and to several British regiments. It displayed also the phlegmatic self-possession and sportsmanlike shrewdness of Wellington ; but had he been disabled that day from carrying out his plan of making his stand at Waterloo, he would have been thought to have impaired his reputation by fighting hurriedly after undue dispersion.¹

It must however be remembered that he had no power over Marshal Blucher, the Prussian. Had he wielded both the armies which defended the Netherlands, he would not have allowed the Prussians to fight in a false position, as they did at Ligny. He would not have committed himself at all so far from Brussels, so near Charleroi. By roads converging towards his base he would have drawn together, after mere combats and rearguard skirmishes, the divisions which it had been necessary for more than one reason to keep apart, watching more than one avenue of invasion.

¹ The 1st and the 28th Foot acted for horsemen in charging loose bodies of French cavalry, and having formed a square at the last moment repelled cavalry from three faces of the square at once ; which is the very height of swiftness and skill. The 44th Foot, being surprised by a sudden charge of cavalry, and not having time to form square, formed a Janus line by the rear rank facing round at the word of command, and in this novel order repelled not merely swordsmen but lancers.

On June 18 he increased his reputation. For he made the best possible use of an army which he knew was not a good one; with this exception, that he did not send for a detachment of seven thousand good troops which he had posted half a day's march from his right wing, and left them under arms all day waiting for orders, and, strange to say, not hearing the cannon. With 1,500 Britons, so screened as to be mistaken for 10,000, he employed and wore out the left wing of the French, commanded by a spirited but incompetent brother of Bonaparte.¹

Towards the close of the defensive battle, when the French by resolute fighting had made a lodgment in his left centre, he bore silently the great peril of that occupation, and the great pain of not being able to expend the necessary number of lives for retaking the post. Although he did not summon the division posted elsewhere to protect him from a flank march that would have got into his line of retreat, yet on the actual field of battle he filled up gaps from time to time, and shifted a division laterally though it had to pass through the sickening disorder which lies behind even an unbroken army; for he trusted to the dis-

¹ This division, Colville's, waiting for orders, had no cavalry. It should have had cavalry if it was to watch the country and prevent the French from suddenly rushing at the English base, Brussels. By the time the battle had lasted two or three hours it must have been clear that the French could spare no men for any such attempt on their left flank; and Colville if sent for would have come up in time to fill some of the dreadful gaps made in the front line by the faithlessness of the Netherlanders and by the slaughter of faithful Hanoverians.

Prince Jerome said, when he looked at Hougomont as a tourist, that he had believed there were ten thousand men there against him all the time.

cipline of his brethren even when he reviled them. Battalions wore away, and squadrons shrunk into troops : but he kept up a show of strength. He lost friend after friend amongst his staff, and had to send messages to brigades by gentlemen who were riding about as spectators. All through the day he watched and counted his followers, and with a frugality unknown to his opponent he husbanded one strong regiment of foot and two little brigades of cavalry till they were needed for the last defensive and the first offensive movement. He was watched then, and questioned since, as no other general ever was ; and his character was made known in searching light. It did not much matter how few Englishmen there were at Waterloo since there was one such Englishman.

But it will be found by anyone who cares to study the details of this battle, a battle which being fought very near home, and in a very observant generation, was studied with an interest in excess of its military importance, that the English officers and the gentlemen of North Germany who served with them gave abundant proof of their mental superiority to the officers of the French army ; whilst in mere pugnacity and fury of onset the private soldiers who won were quite equal to their adversaries. Bonaparte must have felt cruelly the absence of his ablest lieutenants ; but there is reason to think that even the best that he ever commanded were less able than the best Britons and North Germans.¹

¹ It has not been duly noticed that a considerable number of Englishmen held commissions in German regiments attached to the English

French writers have drawn no useful lessons from that woeful day on which their hardiest and most brilliant troops were wasted by wrong-headed leaders. English writers have seldom given due praise to the wonderful resoluteness of the Prussians, nor due blame to the foolishness of the French. In short, they have not explained to their readers that sustained thought issuing in prompt action is more important in war than intrepidity. The Duke of Wellington watched and ruled, whilst Bonaparte stared and struggled. The one relied on the character and the promises of Blucher, the other left things to Ney and to chance. The stronger head prevailed ; the man of sound body and sound mind subdued him who suffered from cutaneous irritation and inveterate wilfulness.²

army. The two nations have never fought each other. At Waterloo they were knit together more closely than would have been thought possible in earlier, perhaps also in later campaigns. English narrators have tried to give due praise to the Germans who were under the Duke of Wellington's command ; but none of them had such opportunities of distinction on that day as some English officers such as Sir Hussey Vivian and Colonel Colborne.

² The peculiarity of the French management on the 18th, as on the 16th of June, was that they persisted in employing mounted troops by themselves to do things which could have been done by a combination of mounted troops with infantry. A lesser mistake, which has not been so much noticed, was that on the 18th they kept their artillery too much as a fixed power separate from the other forces. The mistakes of their Generals are, however, outdone by those of their unprofessional narrators of the battle of June 18, such as M. Thiers, M. Edgar Quinet, and M. Victor Hugo. They make far too much of the overthrow of those English horsemen who rode too far ; this excess caused the death of about ten of the victors for each of the cannon which they put out of action by their assault, and this in itself was a good military bargain, apart from the discomfiture and crippling of French infantry equalling in bulk the whole of the British infantry then in the field. They talk of the French cavalry as overwhelmed by their victories, whereas in truth they rode down only three small regiments of British horse and one

This short campaign, though it was not of critical importance—for had Napoleon won Brussels and annexed Belgium he must have been speedily overthrown by the rest of the allies—was for students valuable in a way not commensurate with the movements ; since it brought to light and impressed on the mind the supremacy of an imperturbable and swift intellect.

England had undertaken, like Austria, Prussia, and Russia, to bring into the field 150,000 soldiers. She was to do so, as usual, by hiring foreigners to supply her numerical deficiencies. Of the few that she sent from home many were slain. Happily for mankind, their loss was proclaimed, felt, and lamented with such an outpouring of pity as had never been known before. In the year 1810 not less than 5,000 men had perished in English ships of war at sea, but not in battle ; they may almost be said to have died unheeded. Forty thousand Britons were buried in the Peninsula during the six years of war. The army which fought at Corunna, that which fought at Talavera, that which failed to fight before Antwerp, all three in the one year 1809, lost through sickness, not to speak of wounds, several times as many men as the Waterloo army. But this last battle was fought very near England, and in the presence of people of fashion : the field, yet strewn with relics and indented with skulls, was explored and ransacked
brigade of Hanoverian infantry, making no impression on the British infantry when formed properly to resist them. They persist in saying that the Duke of Wellington's army prevailed by numbers, although they must know that his second line was a sham force.

by the collectors, the mourners and the poets. So that the dreadfulness of taking young lives in war was more than ever before impressed on the consciousness of the nation, it may be said of two nations; for the fall of the Emperor coincided with, if it did not cause, the awakening of sensibility and imagination in France, and the defeat was narrated by heart-broken eye-witnesses in the hearing of the legislative councils which had let the army sweep them away.¹

The moral effect, then, of the battle fought before Brussels transcends its political effect. And yet the political consequences, that is to say, such consequences as would not have attended a slower and more costly operation for the reconquest of France, were very considerable. England having been in the vanguard of the great alliance, and having gained, thanks to her general, rather more military glory than Prussia, was enabled to take a prominent or even a leading part in the events which followed. Firstly, she escorted Louis back from the Flemish town in which he had waited for his summons, and she made it easier for him to reign because she broke the fall of the French

¹ In the frigate 'Amelia,' which fought, for honour only, at the end of the French war, the strangest and direst of frigate actions, there was greater carnage than in most of the Waterloo regiments: and the 'Amelia' is almost unknown to the readers of English history. No Waterloo regiment had much more than a hundred men killed on the field that day: the 27th Foot reckoned one hundred and five, the Scots Greys (heavy cavalry) one hundred and two, these are the highest figures on the list.

Villemain's 'Souvenirs Contemporains' gives the best account of the 'Cent Jours.'

people and shielded Paris from insult. Secondly, it was to her ships, which cruised before the western ports of France, and not to the camp of his father-in-law, the Emperor of Austria, that General Bonaparte betook himself, when he was at last convinced that France would not even try to save him from indignities : so that he became the prisoner, when he pretended to be the guest, of an English sea captain. Thirdly, it was the English general who was appointed by the allies, with the approval of King Louis, to the command of the army which was set to guard the unstable French Monarchy.

This was called the army of occupation. It was fixed at 150,000 men, so that England could, without exceeding her habitual figure, as one of the five contributing partners, really furnish her contingent clear of mercenaries. This army occupied some twenty towns, more or less fortified, on the north-east side of France : these towns nevertheless were ruled by French civilians, and French garrisons lay in fortresses interspersed therewith. If an English soldier behaved ill to a Frenchman, he was handed over to French authorities, and kept in prison. If an Englishman was wronged by a Frenchman, the Duke of Wellington wrote in his behalf to the French mayor. If an English officer quarrelled at a tavern with a French officer, he was expected by his commander to fight a duel ; and the Duke sent home for the first fencing master in London to teach his officers how to defend themselves with the small sword used in duelling.

France had to pay almost all the expense of main-

taining the army by which her peace was maintained ; and the victor hardly grumbled at having to attend to the most minute details of the bills : for instance, he received with patience and courtesy a complaint made that France had to pay twice for the rations of a few English soldiers lodged in her prisons as misdemeanants. It was probably a mistake to burden and annoy the French at all with this military occupation. A few miles farther to the north, on the other side of the frontier, the troops would have been quite as well placed for supporting Louis ; and they would have been endurable, if not acceptable sojourners, living at the expense of their own country and spending their money in the Netherlands. But it must be owned that there were strong reasons for the measure preferred. Once had the French army effected an absurd and vexatious little revolution ; and it would hardly be calculated that when its idol was shipped for England it would lose its charm. As it was, it soon became manifest that General Bonaparte was not dear even to his brothers and sisters, not one of whom went to partake or to cheer his exile : he had good credit with his private banker in Paris, and no other link united him with France.

It was an honour thrust upon England to take charge of so great a personage ; and in undertaking the duty she relieved the French Government of a great difficulty, and saved the United States of America from an interesting but dangerous guest. When lodged in the hot island of St. Helena, the wealthy

outlaw fretted against the uncourtliness of an English officer appointed to govern the island, who had elsewhere shown high qualities, including courtesy, and was perhaps as able a man as could have been induced to take so disagreeable a position. Some clever and distinguished Britons visited the captive and paid him compliments ; he had more partisans in London than in Paris.¹

When he died, six years after Waterloo, it was found that he had bequeathed part of the money which at his second flight from Paris he took from the treasury, to an insignificant scoundrel who had cunningly contrived to shoot at the Duke of Wellington, and through mere feebleness had missed him. He had also written memoirs, in which there was no contrition, nor any warnings for his son or his country.

III.

THE news of Waterloo took five months to reach Calcutta, the seat of British Government in Asia. Calcutta had news of her own to send home that year ; but the final conflict of the Europeans in Flanders was so exciting that Asiatic events were not

¹ Sir Hudson Lowe was praised in despatches for tact and politeness in dealing with the authorities of Marseilles and Toulon when they were recovered by the French Royalists with English help.

much noticed. Yet in any other times these events would have been thought important.

The inland regions of Ceylon, of which the sea coast only had been held by Europeans, were completely subjugated by a British force without bloodshed. The native potentates gladly accepted their new rulers, and joined in dethroning a faithless and cruel despot called the King of Kandy, who had twelve years before offended England by slow murder of some British prisoners. A great body of people was thus delivered from tyrants, who inflicted mutilation and death at will ; and a great breadth of land was opened to enterprise.

On the mainland, in the country of Nepaul, it was found necessary to carry on an expensive and hazardous war, in order to convince a spirited little nation that it must not trespass on British territory. The Ghorkas, who by right of conquest inhabited Nepaul, were found to be harder to beat than Mah-rattas or Rohillas, or any Indian tribe which had been up to that time dealt with. It was necessary to invade their valleys at three points : and the movements of three little armies, each equivalent to a division or two brigades of a European force, were carefully arranged by Earl Moira, the Governor-General, who was a trained soldier, a thoughtful student, and a high-minded statesman. It was disappointing, but not disheartening, to find that the well-conceived plan broke down more than once through the ordinary British fault, impatience or want of painstaking. General Gillespie was justly

held by Earl Moira to be a brilliant and heroic soldier ; he fell before a small fort called Kalunga, in obstinately thrusting his men against what would have soon yielded to cannon-balls : this happened on the last day of October 1814. After several failures General Ochterlony, in April 1815, obtained such military successes as induced the honoured enemy to desist from all further encroachment. This war was satisfactory in two ways. It cost hardly any money ; for the Governor-General borrowed at six per cent. half the money that was wanted of a fawning ally or dependent, the Newaub of Oude, and got the other half from the same hoard by granting to Oude a strip of land on the Nepaul border, which had been worth only one thousand a year sterling to the Company. What was still more gratifying was the permanence of the peace established on the Nepaul frontier. For more than sixty years, including some years of danger, the Ghorkas have been good neighbours and trustworthy allies of the Europeans. Hard and fair fighting bred mutual respect, and left behind it no bitterness.¹

This was a time when the original Bengal army, not yet mixed with the more warlike races of north-western India, was thoroughly trusted by the Company, officered by competent Englishmen, and, except when called upon to take unbroken fortresses, sure to overcome resistance. The Governor-General was for some years Commander-in-Chief of the army, and

¹ The Newaub of Oude inherited, in 1814, thirteen millions sterling which his father had in eleven years wrung from a country about as populous as Ireland.

examined its divisions with a critical eye and with professional pride. This army, including nearly 20,000 British regular troops and 8,000 Europeans paid by the East India Company, was always ready for action and was in a high state of efficiency. For great emergencies it could bring into the field as many as 90,000 men. For the maintenance of order it supplied very many small garrisons at the disposal of the magistrates.

A little rebellion which broke out on some show of oppression at Bareilly, the chief town of Rohilcund, amongst a people of high mettle and probably not unmindful of past wrongs—for the Rohillas had been wronged by a great Governor-General—was suppressed by a very small force of sepoys and policemen with a promptitude and a moderate vigour which delighted Lord Moira. On his attention being thus called to a grievance, he at once set it right ; no love of soldiership clouded his righteousness. At another time, still in the early years of his honourable reign, he employed the three armies of the three Presidencies, Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, to crush by a well-combined set of movements, a horde of plunderers called Pindarrees, who had for some time infested Central India, and were harboured, if not backed, by the Princes of Indore and Gwalior. These dignified freebooters had been burning whole villages, inhabitants and all, and tying girls to their saddles by threes and fours, when hundreds of girls had from shame and despair thrown themselves into wells. The destruction of this swarm of malefactors was the

plain duty of the sovereign power ; and the responsible statesman who was near the scene of crime and woe overruled the scruples of the Directors sitting in London, who dreaded a Mahratta war. In ten weeks 25,000 armed horsemen were dispersed by the regular troops ; and ultimately their leader was driven into the jungle and left to the tigers. No similar brigandage has since then broken the peace of India.

Besides several less important blows struck at the native princes who took advantage of the Pindarree war to embroil themselves with the English, there was one remarkable series of political and military operations, which in the year 1818 ended with the destruction of the chief Mahratta state. The Peishwa was the title borne by the rulers of Poonah, a place of great value, not far from Bombay ; he was acknowledged as sovereign by other Mahratta states, such as Nagpore, though the ancient and legitimate leader was the Rajah of Sattara. The Peishwa, bound by a treaty what was the sequel of earlier struggles, and watched by a political Resident of the highest character, Mr. Elphinstone, broke faith and tried, not without some chance of success, to destroy more than one British army. Like the Pindarrees, he was hunted over a wide range of country from Mysore to the Nerbudda for six months. Finding no refuge, he laid down his arms. It was thought right to dethrone him and to set up the Rajah of Sattara with a small remnant of jurisdiction as the head of all Mahrattas. The justice of this measure, for which the Governor-General was responsible, has never been dis-

puted ; but forty years afterwards there was found a deadly poison in the decayed residue of this noxious growth.

It would be a mistake to suppose that Earl Moira rejoiced in the parade of military strength. Like the other trained warriors who have ruled in Calcutta for England—like Earl Cornwallis, Lord William Bentinck, and Lord Hardinge—he was free from the desire of conquest. He cared far more for the regular administration of justice. It pained him to see either that the Hindoo religion encouraged inhumanity, or that Mahometan law, under which Mussulman offenders were tried in British dominions, was quite ineffective for the chastisement of those who mutilated the bodies of men. He perceived that his heathen subjects had to be taught the principles of morality ; that for grown-up people the magistrate must be the teacher, and that the young must be schooled in English books. When a native lord wished to curry favour with him and to spend too much on his reception, he persuaded him to let him have the money for a school founded by the noble wife who accompanied him in his grand progresses. In language as stately as his manners he recorded, but only in a private journal reserved for the teaching of his grandchildren, the follies which stirred his fine compassion, the atrocities which moved his calm indignation, the good deeds of his subordinates, and the trustful and kindly behaviour of the native gentlemen whose hearts he won by graciousness. He was too much of a philosopher to be vain, but he owned he was pleased at hearing

that it had been said of him in contrast with some predecessor : ' The King of England should always send us a great Sirdar like this man : that other man was of the weaver caste.' He was made Marquis of Hastings for his services : yet his virtue was beyond the measure of his promotion.¹

During the nine years of his government, which ended in a quarrel with his commercial employers, the Directors of the Company, he exhibited in a form seldom surpassed the attributes of what mankind delights in honouring, kingship. He was served almost unerringly by men of similar worth. In his time great reputations were made in India by Mr. Elphinstone and Sir John Malcolm, whose administrative powers and moral courage were proved to be sufficient even for higher posts than they filled. Among many prompt and indefatigable soldiers, two men below the rank of General, Staunton and Fitzgerald, were conspicuous for fighting against odds when most men would have shrunk from the responsibility ; their exploits, as generally happened with Indian officers for a hundred years after Clive's victories, were hardly known out of India.

In this same happy period, Reginald Heber, the second English clergyman that was entitled Bishop

¹ A student of English history finds his attention and memory taxed by the frequent changes of names, caused by aristocratic complexities. The title Hastings has nothing to do with the surname Hastings borne by the untitled Mr. Warren Hastings, Governor-General of India, thirty years before the Marquis.

One of the creditable facts in the biography of George IV. is that Earl Moira was his friend as late as the year 1812 ; to the Earl this friendship was perhaps less becoming.

of Calcutta, spent his energies with honour in visiting all the stations at which the Gospel was preached to Englishmen, and in observing with rare perspicacity, and noting down with perfect literary taste, the ways of the strange people which it was then thought possible to christianise. His career was short, because he wore himself out in the happy discharge of his duties : nor did he make that impression on the conquered races which has often been made by laymen holding office. But his ' Journal ' was the first book written about India that was read with lively interest by those who never went there. It was in itself a sort of gospel, for it told the English that the strangers had good feelings, and that kindness done them might be the seed of virtue. To this day one may read with pleasure Bishop Heber's account of the gratitude wherewith the people of Delhi rejoiced when Lord Hastings restored the aqueduct built long ago by a Mussulman king, a symbol, if not the first fruits, of the comfort to be given by the Christians to a land blighted by misrule.

Lord Hastings left India in strong hands, although his titular successor was not an important person. There was in 1825 at Agra a civil officer, Sir Charles Metcalfe, who had a soldierly spirit and was allowed by the Governor-General, Lord Amherst, to direct by counsel a commander of troops sent freshly from England, Lord Combermere. It had become expedient to carry on warlike operations to avert probable but not instant danger. There was a singularly well-walled town with a superb citadel,

a conceited army, a rich treasury, and a people oppressed by an usurper. Tradition calls it Bhurtpore, caprice makes it hard to find on the map by calling it Baratpur. It is near the old imperial cities Delhi and Agra. It had defied and resisted the British conqueror of Delhi, and as long as it stood as a fastness of barbarous pride, the inhabitants of Northern India doubted whether the English race was invincible. Lord Combermere was known as a brilliant leader of cavalry ; he had served with renown under the Duke of Wellington without being one of his few trusted lieutenants. He was told to take Bhurtpore, and he was mercifully supplied with a force of thirty thousand men, which was sufficient for investing a place of eight miles circumference, and was not required to keep at arm's length any relieving force. For once there was a siege conducted by Englishmen at leisure, according to the method taught in books. Every step was taken carefully and briskly. Trenches so deep and broad that the officers enjoyed sitting at table in them, led to the counterscarp or exterior lip of the fosse. Here the engineers lodged their miners, broke down the outer, and with lavish use of gunpowder undermined the inner side of the ditch. Having made a slope both ways which the elderly general could descend and mount, they examined in daylight the reverse slope of the rubbish heap which was called the breach, and in daylight also they sent without flurry or confusion rival bodies of Britons, Hindoos, and Ghorkhas, to sweep the terraces of the rampart and drive all the defenders into the citadel.

The Commander-in-Chief climbed up soon after the first storming party, which in this case was not as in other assaults honoured by the name of forlorn hope. The Grenadier company of the 59th Foot used grenades like the Grenadiers of old times ; these were small bomb-shells ; the fuzes were lighted ; they were thrown by hand amongst the defenders of the breach to frighten them ; there was no gunpowder inside, for General Nicholls explained that if charged they hurt friends nearly as much as foes, if empty they were sure to cause some disorder amongst the barbarians. Yet there was much loss of blood. Of eight hundred Pathan soldiers who had promised their chief to defend a bastion, only seventy survived the four weeks' siege. Lord Combermere got 60,000*l.* prize money, each private soldier 4*l.* It took three years to collect and distribute these sums. But the surrender of the citadel with its treasures was made to coincide with the making of peace in Burmah, where the English forces had spent two seasons on the banks of an unhealthy but navigable river, and had blundered through wooden stockades into fights which the character of their foes made almost inglorious. In February 1826 the East India Company felt itself indisputably supreme over all the races, warlike or effeminate, between the Sutlej and the Irrawaddy rivers, and entered on a twelve years' peace with some hope of retrenchment.¹

¹ Lord Combermere's prize money was left in a Calcutta bank and lost. There are two known instances of English mansions and estates purchased by warriors through the investment of prize money.

IV.

INDIA was so far off, that it seldom interested others besides the kinsfolk of the Company's servants or the veterans who had served there. Marches, sieges, dethronements, pacifications, were accomplished methodically, without being talked of at home. The nation believed itself to be at peace when it was losing thousands of soldiers under the fierce sky and the pestilent moisture of that strange land. The Indian disease, then called spasmodic cholera, which slew far more than the Mahrattas could slay, had as yet no terrors for the readers of newspapers. For want of maps, they could not comprehend the far-reaching projects and the persevering exertions of the conquerors. In the age of assured European peace which followed the capture of Bonaparte, the 'Gazette' was dull. For many years there was but one achievement that was made much of. This was the bombardment of Algiers on August 27, 1816.

Algiers was reckoned with the Barbary States; it was one of the towns on the North Coast of Africa in which there had long been petty tyrants, nominally the subordinates of the Turkish Sultan, virtually independent, ruling lawlessly over Mahometans, too stupid to know their own insignificance, unable, as Mahometans generally were, to imagine the powerfulness of civilised states. Three hundred years

earlier there had been gleams of nobleness in the Turks ; they were then in the later stages of enthusiastic progress. Now and then in the centuries of Turkish decline it had been found necessary for Northern Christians to take upon themselves those duties towards the Barbary States which properly devolved on Spain, France, and Italy. England drew supplies of food for her Mediterranean garrisons from Tunis and the ports of Morocco, particularly when at war with Spain. Her armed ships generally secured the North African sea ; but in 1815 the United States of America in protecting their trade had to quarrel with the ruler of Algiers and to enforce a temporary compliance with the rules of civilisation. The Algerines were not content with piracy. Perhaps mere piracy would have been tolerated a little longer ; for there is always a time when commerce increases so rapidly as to tempt pirates, but losses are not quite grievous enough to compel governments to take sufficiently stringent measures for their extermination. The Algerines were not content with robbing and burning ships ; they took home the crews, and made slaves of all sorts of Europeans, or, as they were commonly called, Christians. Good men sometimes left moneys on trust for the redeeming of Christian slaves from Barbary ; this was an ancient and honoured form of piety, and the crimes on which mercy was fed were ranked with the evils out of which good might come. But when there began to be a general recognition of public law and of leading states responsible for its

enforcement, it was time for the Mahometans of North Africa to mend their ways. In 1816 it was ascertained that there were many Christian captives in the Algerine province.

It was expected of the British fleet, or rather squadron, in the Mediterranean to procure their release. Five ships of the line were then in that sea under Lord Exmouth, a famous English admiral. Small as this force was, it was the chief squadron in the Mediterranean, and it was sufficient. But to the gratification of those who remembered how England had in good times fought with Holland against a great French king, Lord Exmouth added to his force five Dutch frigates which offered their aid ; and the two old maritime powers were once more, after more than a hundred years, honourably allied for an act of wholesome severity.¹

The squadron had no land troops to follow up an assault, and it was hardly prudent to trust to ships alone. Fine weather, good anchorage without shoals to drift on, perfect skill in handling sails and rudders, were needed, to avert failure. Good gunnery was not needed, since the seamen fired at a mass of stolid Mahometans sitting on an open mole or embankment, and at forts facing the water at an easy distance. The guns of the ships of those days were numerous.²

¹ A fleet was supposed to contain at least ten ships of two decks or more, big enough to be in the line of battle, besides their attendant frigates, sloops, or brigs.

² As late as the year 1828 an English ship of a thousand tons (not calculated as in later times by accurate measurement) was 'pierced' for forty-six guns.

Lord Exmouth's ship had a broadside of fifty. These were nearer together than the guns of a fort ; concentrated or converging fire was a set-off against the superior hardness of stone walls. Nevertheless the slaughter in the ships was greater than in other naval battles. The cannonade lasted till sunset without silencing the enemy, and the supply of powder and shot failed ; nine hundred tons of iron had been hurled at the city. It was necessary to weigh anchor and to go out of range by help of the evening land breeze. Yet the Turks were so dull as to assume that they were beaten, and to give up their captives on the morrow of this obstinate combat. Englishmen are said to be very dull of apprehension when worsted ; they certainly are gloriously mendacious in telling their adversaries that it is time to yield. The bombardment of Algiers was, like Nelson's desperate attack on Copenhagen, reckoned as a victory ; nor was any naval fight graced with more satisfactory prizes ; three thousand human beings were set at liberty. It may be noted also that this was the last action in which special distinction was won for anchoring with perfect precision by a master ; that is to say, by one of those skilled seamen who in old times did the work of seamanship for the captains, encountering the same dangers from foe and from court-martial without the same prospect of decoration. This also deserves mention, that Lord Exmouth who delivered Christian slaves was famous for having saved sailors from drowning.¹

¹ As the master of a ship called ' Queen Charlotte ' was by Lord Howe

For many years after this battle there were very few opportunities for British seamen to gain honour, except by vigilant cruising off the unhealthy coast of tropical Africa for the punishment of slave-traders. The age of peace was for the navy an age of endurance and beneficence.

V.

THE management of English affairs during the long war which ended in 1815 was in the hands of an aristocracy. This was composed of the families which had constant access to the Court and to the public offices, and which at the same time filled the two Houses of Parliament. These families were grouped round hereditary estates and mansions ; and there were not many of them whose chiefs were without titles. The actual holders of titles supplied the members of one of the Houses of Parliament, though many Lords or Peers did not enjoy seats in it, either because they were Catholics, and therefore held to be untrustworthy, or because they were Scotsmen or Irishmen. Of the Scottish lords a certain number, fixed by the Act of Union, was sent by the whole body acting as electors to sit in the House of Lords whenever a Parliament was by Royal writ summoned to take counsel : a new Parliament was summoned whenever

praised for the battle of June 1, 1794, so the master of another 'Queen Charlotte' was praised by Lord Exmouth.

there was a new monarch and whenever the monarch or his ministers thought it convenient. Of the Irish peers, a more numerous and less dignified body than the Scottish peers, a certain number fixed by the Irish Act of Union sat in the House for life, not requiring fresh election on a dissolution of Parliament. There was a third set of peers who had seats for life, not by inheritance : the bishops of England and a few of the bishops of that Irish Church which was called part of the United Church. These bishops were the only peers who had no territorial influence and no control over any towns or districts that sent representatives to the House of Commons.

The three small bodies, the Scottish, the Irish, and the clerical or 'spiritual' lords, together made up a body of seventy-four persons, who, if not quite legislators by merit, were at least not legislators by sheer birth-right, whilst the lord who presided in the House was always the Chancellor, a lawyer of considerable success, if not authority. These seventy-five were, roughly speaking, a fourth of the peers that had seats and were able to sit and vote, for there were many boys excluded for non-age and many imbecile persons. The peers who habitually attended the meetings of their assembly were not so numerous as they would have been but for the unsound custom of voting by proxy or delegation. Any one whose conscience did not forbid him to legislate without listening to debate could delegate his power to a peer present at the voting, and it was customary for old men, poor men and indolent men, as well as for those

who were honourably engaged in garrisons or colonies, to assign their votes to the leader of their party.¹

The ordinary business was conducted by a score or two ; it once happened that eighteen peers rejected a bill for the abolition of the slave-trade, and of these eighteen six were sons of King George III. On the other hand, the gradual education of the aristocracy in the principles of public equity was promoted year after year by six or eight peers who used with great firmness a right peculiar to their House, the right of protesting against a vote ; their protests were terse and solid statements of argument committed to durable records, and driven in like nails conspicuously.

Legislation could be, and was, hindered for more than one generation by the stolidity of the hereditary lawgivers, and their mixed indolence and wilfulness would have been intolerable if they had been a co-ordinate authority with the Commons in the enactment of measures that admitted of no delay. Happily they dared not meddle with money matters. The King's Minister, whose business it was to ascertain how much money was required for the year's service, sat and was obliged to sit in the House of Commons ; to the Commons alone did he set forth the ways and means of getting the money. The Lords could not clog the wheels of the state machine by direct interference with his scheme which went by the name of the Budget. But indirectly they could hamper even financial voting. A considerable number of voters in

¹ Assigned votes, or proxies, could not be used when the House was considering the clauses of bills in Committee : so that the mischief done by them was far less than it might have been.

the House of Commons voted under the influence of peers. Of these some were the sons or other near kinsfolk of peers ; others were sent to Parliament nominally by fellow-citizens, really by Lords who dictated to the electors. Habitually allowed to act with freedom, these members of the House of Commons were at any moment liable to be told by their patrons how they were to act.¹

The great bulk of the representative House, which settled the ordinary pressing business of the nation, consisted of gentlemen like minded with the titled politicians of the Upper House. They were either landholders or closely connected with landholders ; in many cases they were as rich,² as well-born, as high-spirited, as the landholders of the hereditary House. Their wealth and social station made them apparently independent ; they were often nearly as sure of sitting in Parliament as if their seats were

¹ He who had to explain the financial scheme was and is called Chancellor of the Exchequer. So there are two Chancellors in England, neither of them like a Russian or German Chancellor. Yet the term Chancery is used in the British diplomatic service in the European sense for a diplomatic office.

The word 'citizen' is not a term of British common law : the proper word is in England 'subject ;' in Scotland it seems that 'liege' can be used.

² It is computed that the titled people or lords of the United Kingdom amount to about six hundred families ; that they own one-fifth of the land and one-tenth of the income derived from land in the form of rent. But it ought to be pointed out to students that these lords are not rich because they are lords ; rather, they have mostly been made lords because they are rich, and a banker or millowner who buys land with his earnings has a good prospect of earning a peerage. A great number of peerages are traced to success in the profession of barrister-at-law. Most of the richest peerages are traced to prudent marriages. Great landed estates are mostly concretions, rivetted by a series of marriage settlements. Complex coats of arms indicate the coalescence of estates.

settled estates. But it was held by men who knew the world, that no squires and hardly any peers were unsusceptible of courtly and ministerial allurements. There were no families that did not from time to time want places of emolument or badges of distinction. The squire, who was sure of being as long as he liked a knight of the shire or representative of a county, was seldom indifferent—and if he was, his wife was not—to a title which gave precedence over esquires. Society was tied together, and the decades of manhood were marked, by the gradation, partly fortuitous, partly designed by the Court, of dignities and rights. By steady voting a Member of Parliament, that is to say, of the Lower House, earned hereditary knighthood—became a Baronet. By lavish expenditure in contested elections, the Baronet earned a Barony, the Baron an Earldom, the Earl a Marquisate. Even a Duke had something to wish for, as long as he was not a Knight of the Garter, distinguished by a blue ribbon in a crowd of black-coated gentlemen. Even a Knight of the Garter would be an incomplete lord as long as he was not Lord-Lieutenant, that is to say, the chief of the magistracy and of the local troops in his county. It was said that the only independent men were the Dukes, who were Lords-Lieutenant and Knights of the Garter. In the sustained efforts made by some families of landholders, efforts ranging, perhaps, over a hundred years, to attain these high levels of society, many strokes of matrimonial combination were delivered, and many sums of money, borrowed, perhaps, at high interest, were invested in

lands that carried a fine growth of parliamentary influence.¹

These persons could not manage their estates without the constant help of skilled agents, of whom some were stewards or collectors of rents employed to make covenants with farmers and house tenants, others were attorneys or solicitors, who negotiated all contracts which required some knowledge of law, such as settlements made at marriage; others were bankers, charged with the custody of moneys, but not paying interest to the depositors.

On these stocks hung the secondary growth of those more learned and more dignified lawyers whom the solicitors consulted and employed as advocates. The property guarded or assailed by the lawyers was called real property, and was looked upon with respect which bordered on superstition; for instance, it was the law, maintained against argument by the Lord Chancellor and other lords who followed him, that if a landowner died without having paid what he owed to shopkeepers, these debts, called simple contract debts, were not to be made a charge on the land, although they might be charged on the balance held for him by his banker, and derived from his land-rents.

It was held that the King's government could not

¹ Esquire means a gentleman who is not a knight or anything above a knight; squire means a gentleman with a footing in a county, above a yeoman or freeholding peasant.

Between the Baron and the Earl comes the Viscount, a term used differently in France.

The dignities of Lord-Lieutenant and Knight of the Garter are not hereditary.

be carried on unless the lords and squires who swayed the counties and the smaller boroughs were kept in good humour by a lively sense of benefits conferred or expected ; and the First Minister, or First Lord of the Treasury, felt their mouths with the double bit of gratitude and hope ; but he found it necessary to employ one of the Secretaries of the Treasury to play for him on the actual Members of Parliament. As long as the great French War lasted, it was easy to create out of the annual public loans a stipend or ‘ place for every man worth having.’ Lord Liverpool was not so unscrupulous as to continue this prodigality during years of peace, and therefore he found government more difficult. But there were about four-score members of the House of Commons on whom he could use the motive of fear ; these were gentlemen holding lands and slaves in the sugar colonies, who had to be protected from the Abolitionists. In like manner he may be said to have held a rod of terror over the corn-growing squires, inasmuch as he could at any time let loose against them the growing force of the economists ; economic reason was embodied in a minister, Mr. Huskisson.

The legislators whose incomes were believed to depend on the maintenance of slavery were called the West India interest. Those whose incomes were believed to depend on the dearness of wheat were called the Agricultural interest. The one interest overvalued slave property ; the other interest undervalued their tenure of the one thing which could not be increased in quantity—habitable land within the

British seas. Both interests were clouded with erroneous theories of wealth ; their delusions were the more venial because they were shared by statesmen and men of letters.

However prodigal a squire might be, the heir, it was held, was to inherit the land free from all obligations that were not stated in the settlement ; for it was public policy to guard against the decay of land-owning families. This policy has been disputed by good patriots who were also reasoners. But in the age of unbroken aristocracy the strong feeling in favour of permanent rent-rolls was quite beyond the reach of sceptical argument. About one hundred and fifty years earlier the forfeiture of a neighbour's estate was an event which a man of good position looked for, with the hope of getting from King Charles II. a grant thereof ; and after the Revolution of 1688 royal grants were revoked or at least disputed ; such uncertainties were the last faint rumblings after the storm of civil war. In an age of slow litigation there was a general abhorrence of unstable possession. Mortgages might cling to the deeply-rooted families, but the stem was almost an object of worship.

England during and after the long war rejoiced in being as unlike France as possible. No one then perceived that the French peasants had drawn new and great wealth from subdivided lands ; and had it been demonstrated that the enemy had thriven by multiplying and liberating his farmers, nevertheless it would have been argued, not without truth, that he

lacked the best securities of liberty, the steadfastness and the diffused activity of country gentlemen. Britain was led alternately by Whigs and Tories ; and over both these parties the Court had the mighty influence derived from its exclusive right to give social distinctions ; but at any moment, if the Court made a false step, there arose, for the occasion, out of a confluence of Whigs and Tories, the country party. There were things which the Court dared not ask for ; there were things which it asked for and was refused ; nor was it unreasonable to associate this quiet independence with the perpetuity of gentle families.

The word rent was singularly prominent in English terminology. In political discussions it meant agricultural rent, the payment for the use of any durable advantage in the business of a farmer that was got by the exclusive occupancy of pieces of land. Farming became profitable during the long war, because the war almost entirely cut off the importation of corn and wool ; and at the same time manufacturers, aided by the coal which generated steam, having the start of foreigners, and through the supremacy of the British Navy having access to many markets, became so numerous as to increase considerably the demand for farm produce.¹ During

¹ It may be asked : Why did war stop the importation of corn and wool, if it did not stop the export of manufactured goods ? The answer may be thus indicated : farm produce could be, from its bulkiness, more easily kept back from the shores by the custom-houses of the French and of the other enemies, and those parts of Europe which now habitually sell corn to England have been, long since the war, stimulated into this business by advances of English money, traceable to more complete knowledge of facts. It is not so easy to say why America did not before the year

the prevalence of this demand the wages of farm labourers were low, since their ignorance of all but what passed before their eyes and under their feet prevented them from claiming any share in the profits caused by the demand for food. Accordingly, the position of the tenant farmer seemed to be good, and in some parts of England this appearance of tempting advantage was strengthened by the admixture of tenant farmers who held their lands by virtue of special arrangements made with improvident landlords. For there were many who, instead of paying year by year a considerable sum for the use of land, paid only a nominal rent, having once for all bought by a single payment the right to occupy the farm throughout the existence of three persons selected for youthfulness and good constitutions ; ² and there were many others who in a similar manner had paid in advance for the right to farm for certain periods, and at the end of such a period had a right to the renewal of the lease on the payment of a sum fixed by the first bargain.³

These two kinds of contracts for farming were favourable to tenants, and were among the signs of unthriftiness in landlords. But they tended, for the

1812 sell corn so regularly and abundantly as to keep down the price in the English market: the caprice of the Atlantic Ocean was not then sufficiently limited by the steam engine.

² These were called leases on lives: they were granted not only by needy landlords who at some pinch wanted round sums of cash, but also by the managers of public lands bequeathed in former ages for beneficent purposes.

³ This payment was called a fine, that is, end: these leases were called beneficial leases, and were habitually granted by clerical landlords in particular.

time, to the encouragement of tillage ; and the gains of those who were benefited by them probably drew others into agriculture from classes which, in later times, have supplied emigrants for distant regions. To satisfy the applicants for farms, many tracts of poor land were ploughed and fenced, instead of being left to the wasteful use of roaming herds. But in many instances this extension of tillage was, though seemingly thrifty, really improvident. Nothing but a high price of corn coincident with low wages could make it profitable to till poor land and also to pay rent for it ; and if the retrospective discernment of the economists, exerted in the first years of the peace, had been anticipated during the war in the shape of timely forecast, they might have warned the agriculturists against reckoning on durable success. As it was, the excitement of the war time seems to have carried away the dwellers in fenced fields.¹

It was a time in which commodities were produced rapidly, but not so rapidly as to pay for the lavish expenditure of the Government on war and of landholders on pleasure. Neither the Government nor the taxpayers, neither the manufacturers who drew workmen into towns, nor the squires who built homes for their eldest sons and got places under the Crown for

¹ A high price of corn and other raw products of agriculture is spoken of above: not of commodities generally: a general or universal rise of prices means a fall in the value of the precious metals. This general change did not take place during the war.

It is not always unprofitable to till poor land ; but generally the profit rises with the fertility of the land, and it is from this fund that agricultural rent is derived: the mistake is to suppose that all land that will receive a plough therefore necessarily bears rent.

their other sons ; neither those who by exporting cloth enabled the ministers to maintain armies abroad, nor those whose industry was shown in importuning the ministers for appointments, perceived that they were creating a great body of genteel encumbrancers or annuitants, and a formidable mass of hungry cottagers to be maintained by legal almsgiving.

When Parliament was assembled at the beginning of the year 1815, it was thought the first duty of the legislators to secure society against the lessening of rent : and their device for averting this calamity was a new law forbidding the importation of corn until it reached a very high price. They were prepared to endure a low price if it was the result of good harvests ; in this case they would submit to it as a dispensation of Divine Providence, not an obvious blessing, but a chastisement.

They were not ready to submit to the cheapening of food by letting in the overflow from the food harvests of France or Russia ; perhaps it was the same Providence that afflicted the French or the Russians with plenty ; but this dispensation was to be barred at the ports of Britain. That monopoly with which the war had blest them they would not part with in peace. It had encouraged some to reclaim by drainage the fen lands of Lincolnshire, and thereby to increase permanently the wealth of the country ; for the reclaimed lands were nearly as suitable for wheat tillage as the valley of the Danube. It had tempted others to sow seed in cold clay, on steep hillsides, in wet moors, and in the fringe of the Grampians where every field had

to be laboriously rid of boulders ; and here too, the result was not unsatisfactory, if wheat was grown merely as a necessary sequel in the rotation of crops. It had concurred with the action of small bankers, who stretched credit by help of local currency, to stimulating a feverish speculation in land. It had enabled a few squires to race with merchants in the pursuit of gain. On the whole it seemed an institution to be preserved by patriots.¹

✱ In 1814 the remonstrances of the manufacturers had averted the enactment of a law for keeping out foreign corn. But when Bonaparte was at Elba and Wellington at Vienna, the landholders took courage. They passed with overwhelming majorities that corn law which is the best known of their many corn laws. They ruled that foreign wheat generally should be kept out of British markets until the price of British wheat rose to 80s. a quarter, or 10s. a bushel : only wheat grown in the North American colonies might

¹ 'I know no part of Scotland so much, and so visibly, improved within thirty years as Aberdeenshire. At that time the country between Keith and Stonehaven was little else than a hopeless region of stones and moss. There were places of many miles where literally there was nothing but large grey stones of from half a ton to ten tons weight to be seen. A stranger to the character of the people would have supposed that despair would have held back their hands from even attempting to remove them. However, they began, and year after year have been going on making dykes and drains, and filling up holes with these materials, till at last they have created a country, which, when the rain happens to cease and the sun to shine is really very endurable.'—Lord Cockburn's 'Memorials,' vol. i. p. 172. (A.D. 1838).

A certain 'land jobber' petitioned Parliament to annul his bargains when he had invested 150,000*l.* on purchases of land which the fall of prices compelled him to sell at a loss ; a caricature, but not a monstrous deduction from the habitual interference of the legislature with the commerce of landholders.

be admitted when the price at home was 67s. a quarter. This was a moderate protection of the monopoly ; it was an abatement of high claims, for those who dreaded cheapness asserted that 96s. or 135s. would be the just figure.¹

This enactment was supported by a show of reasoning, but its supporters scoffed at the methodical reasoners under the name of 'political economists.' They sneered at Adam Smith, whose doctrines about the rationale of business had been imbibed thirty years ago by their own master and idol, Mr. Pitt. They could not pretend to think lightly of their foremost opponent, Mr. Alexander Baring, for he was the dealer in money whom the Government consulted at every step in all operations of finance. Nor did they treat with want of personal respect their second adversary Mr. Horner, a genuine philosopher who, though in private letters he called the country gentlemen plunderers and anarchists, gave no offence in parliamentary debate and spoke with the earnestness of deep conviction. The two defenders of cheap food were thanked by the citizens of London in their council : but the towns did not clamour loudly enough ; perhaps this particular enactment was seen to be futile.²

In the House of Lords the cause of common sense

¹ There were corresponding figures for other kinds of grain: oats, the cheapest of the cereals, were fixed at 26s. for foreign, and 22s. for colonial produce.

² The word used by Mr. Horner was *Jacobins*: a term freely applied by the men of that age to all political combatants who in any way agreed with the authors of the French Revolution.

was pleaded by ten men headed by Lord Grenville, an accomplished statesman, who had been at an early age raised by his cousin, Mr. Pitt, to a very high office, and had been since Mr. Pitt's death the leader of a few considerable persons who stood between the Whigs and the Tories. The protest written by him and signed by nine others may be read with interest as a summary of what was then said against the policy of restriction on the importation of food, yet it is inadequate. There was need of bitter disappointment for the squires, of a synoptical treatise for the readers, of courage and passion amongst young traders in the towns, and of debaters who would unweariedly hammer at the minds of Parliament men, till prejudice should bend and selfishness give way. It took thirty years to bring it home to the conscience of British rulers, that the argument for the corn law was but a canticle of superstition.

VI.

A REFLECTIVE mind may well be slow to fasten upon an explanation of the distress which came in the train of peace on England alone.

When some region has been trampled by armies, peace begins at once to let fall thereon the industry which repairs the losses. The process of healing begins at once. Suffering is still perceptible, but it is the suffering of a convalescent. How was it that

a country not invaded, a land in which no year of the long war passed without the building of factories, the enlargement of mines, the reclaiming of waste, the construction of piers, canals, roads and bridges, the invention of something new in sciences applied to arts, was troubled and even streaked with blood, in consequence of the great disarming? The war had diverted from reproductive industry a huge bulk of capital, that is to say, of that wealth which was reserved for the maintenance of labourers to be employed in fresh enterprises. But the war had never been so exhausting as to paralyse reproductive industry ; and the peace of course drew back capital to its regular channel. Foreigners who had invested savings in English Government funds took advantage of the peace to sell with profit the stock they held, and took these gains back to the Continent. They were believed to carry off three millions of pounds. The nation's industrial career was not in the least danger of a check. Every sea, every harbour, was open to her ships. Her power of putting things in their places, which is the simplest expression for useful physical labour, was increasing every year by the opening of her coal pits ; within two years of Waterloo the coal-owners, headed by an earl, were rewarding with a splendid gift of silver the inventor of the 'Davy lamp,' which was to save more bodies of strong men than the blunders of generals had sent to death. Against her artificers thus furnished with motive force, there was in Europe and North America no serious rivalry ; Alsace, Zurich, and Massachusetts were not yet in the field of compe-

tition. Her weavers of cotton had superseded the weavers of Bengal, and the indigo of Behar came back in cloth to Calcutta from Liverpool. The brewers of the Trent had indeed lost their customers in Germany : so far had Bonaparte succeeded. During the few years of French tyranny the Germans had learnt perforce to brew for themselves, and the versatile genius of Burton had to call into existence a new set of drinkers for a more bitter beverage. But it would not be easy to mention any other lasting injury done to British producers by the prohibitory decrees issued at Milan and Berlin.

In supplying to Europe what was called colonial produce, such as the tea of China or the sugar of the West Indies, the British merchants must have no doubt felt that the Americans, the Dutch, and the French were, by the cessation of war and blockade, let loose to compete with them ; and the French chemists, encouraged by a brief monopoly, had taught their people to set the home-grown beetroot against the tropical sugar-cane. But on the other hand the luxuriant wildernesses of South America were becoming accessible, now that the exclusive and inhospitable Spaniards were ceasing to rule therein ; and the skins of oxen slain on the River Plate were coming to England to be tanned into leather, and their bones, ground to dust, were known to be good for the forcing of crops in shires of improving husbandry.¹

¹ Mr. Coke, the squire of Holkham, was engaged in making poor land fertile ; he was believed to have invested half a million pounds in this enterprise, with that success which ensures imitation.

Underwriters had henceforth less to do, for there was no need to insure a ship against capture. The owners of vessels that had been hired as transports found that occupation, with its high profits, curtailed. Those who had bought gold to sell it to the Treasury for remittance to Lord Wellington's camp ceased from that splendid play. The men of business who swarmed round the Admiralty prize courts, could no longer fatten on the spoils wrung from the spoilers. There were no more strokes to be made by contracting to furnish a hasty or improvident Minister with the stuff that he must have for his arsenals and his victualling-houses.

When such sources of lucre as these fail, there must be scores of purses to shrink. But the profits amassed during the war were not wrested by peace from the winners in the game of speculation ; they were invested in land, or embarked in new traffic. The credit at banks, which was the purchasing power of successful men, and was called wealth, could be henceforth employed to set in motion the arms of hired men for extracting new things out of the earth's contents.¹ The wants of mankind were greater than ever, though there were not so many people lounging about in expectation of battle. The wants were to a

¹ People are said to gain wealth when they have put in their pockets what has come from other pockets, or entered on the credit side of their bank account what has been struck out of the credit side of other men's bank accounts. This transference might go on interminably without any increase of real wealth. Those who make real wealth must have stirred new industrial efforts, taking more out of the forces of nature, wasting less. Real distress implies that many men are idling or misapplying their labour.

great extent the wants felt by customers holding in their hands equivalents for what they wanted ; in the language of the nascent school, there was a great ' effectual demand ' for the commodities which the skilled people of Britain could sell. And this supply was no longer hindered by an Emperor hating the English, or by English statesmen spiting the Americans at the cost of Yorkshire and Lancashire.¹

x If, then, there was increasing efficacy and an expanding market, it could not be that the country was getting poorer.² The manufacturers and traders might indeed have complained, but they had not yet begun to complain, that the Corn Law, and other regulations of similar design, forbade the still greater expansion of trade with foreigners. Their actual complaint was, that they were continuing to pay war taxes. The army was still numerous, although about one-fifth of it was fed by France. The payments made to the discharged soldiers and sailors, although sure to lessen year after year, were up to a high figure. The interest on the National Debt, which sixty years later was calculated to be about one-fifth of the annual savings of the nation, was then perhaps more than one-half. It was disappointing, even irritating, to

¹ In the year 1815 the people of the United States bought nearly four and a half millions worth of British woollen goods ; no one knows how they clothed themselves in 1812-14 during their absurd war, in which they took or destroyed about two thousand British vessels, with equivalent loss and destruction of their own.

² Property insured against fire is tangible and is by the supposition valuable or exchangeable. Insurances against fire, although discouraged by an enormous tax, increased between the years 1801 and 1821 in the whole United Kingdom 75 per cent. This is a solid proof of increase of real wealth.

see new loans negotiated after Bonaparte had reached his prison. Men had not considered, in the excitement of victory, that they were charging their estates with the maintenance of so many idle annuitants.¹

These annuitants themselves, whether they were officers on half-pay, or holders of stock, groaned under the unexpected pressure of the tax-gatherer. They could economise by living in France, but they did not often see their way to the virgin lands in which they could have created solid wealth by industry brought to bear on brute nature. Some officers became clergymen, and therefore began to live on tithes, that is to say, on an old tax levied on rents. Many lads, who would have become officers had the war gone on, went to the Universities and crowded the genteel professions ; they did not go to business, which would create wealth. India, although it was ruled by Englishmen, did not then lie open to English settlers, only to those whom the Company employed or licensed. Canada and Australia did not attract gentlefolks. The Government made a feeble and silly attempt to bribe poor men to settle in South Africa, for fear they should go to the United States. Unwillingness to make new homes, inability to pass from gentility into trade, adhesiveness and exclusive-

¹ Taxes are paid out of what can be so spared or so saved as to be added to capital : it must be remembered in these calculations that some part of the savings comes from incomes which are paid by the taxes either in the form of salaries or of profits on sales made to the Government, or, a more considerable item, of annuities paid by the Government to its creditors—the holders of stock. So that money here, as in other cases, is reckoned twice : part of what is reckoned as increase of capital comes out of that increased capital (savings) which supplies the taxes.

ness due to the habit of looking on everything as hereditary, hindered the educated men from joining the ranks of producers ; the converse of this has been since observed in America.

Whilst the gentlemen were cramped by fastidiousness, by ignorance of foreign languages and of applied sciences, by the fear of losing their social position, and by the habit of relying on patronage, the common people, as they were then called, were, probably to an extent beyond their brethren in France or Holland, tied down by habits of dependence, designedly and artificially fostered ; of this it will be necessary to speak when the amendment of the Poor Laws is considered.

In villages dependence was more benumbing than in towns. But in towns no less than in villages there was very great unthriftiness. This was due mainly to the Poor Laws, but also to the influence of example. Probably, it was no new thing for the English peasants to be improvident ; but during the war with Napoleon there seems to have been an outburst of extravagance in the prosperous classes, which could hardly fail to infect their subordinates. In the British Islands, more than in the American States, more, perhaps, than in most parts of Europe, the morals of the rich, for good and for evil, have been communicated to the peasantry through the domestic servants who have come from cottages and have gone back to cottages. It may be believed that in all generations this influence has been beneficent rather than mischievous ; but if there ever was an age in which

thrift was not likely to be taught by the example of masters and mistresses, it was the early part of the nineteenth century.

Yet it was an age in which a good many men were trying to do good to their neighbours. Whilst the Regent gave up a considerable part of his income, and the ministers one-tenth of their salaries, to appease the discontent, if not to lessen the burdens of the nation, some wise men tried to combat unthriftiness, at least among the poor. They took advantage of the observations made by actuaries for the companies which granted insurances. Having, as they thought, learnt how to calculate probabilities of death, they framed schemes for clubs of mutual insurance, and they gave, in some cases, money in aid of the club-funds. About the same time was invented the Savings Bank : an improvement, no doubt, on the *Mont-de-Piété* of the Roman clergy, and calculated, in the light of knowledge then attained, to raise the receivers of wages into the position of humble capitalists ; but not strong enough to counteract the Poor Law. On a Saturday you might have seen a gentleman's parlour visited by a score of market-people, to leave their pence in his keeping for transmission to the bank ; on a Sunday, after evening prayers, you might have seen the wives of labourers thronging the vestry to demand shillings for their children, one apiece. The spurious almsgiving, it might be feared, would do more harm than the coaxed and patronised investments would do good.¹

¹ The first savings bank was avowedly 'charitable;' its founders

The people were too ignorant to go beyond the seas of their own accord ; but there was here and there a thin and intermittent stream of inland migration. This stream set from the south to the north of England, from impoverished rural parishes and from crowded suburbs to the counties of mines and manufactures. It was not wholly spontaneous. The rulers of a Southern parish would sometimes bargain with the Northerners to send them hands for their works, on condition that a certain number of imbecile persons should be taken therewith. These useless creatures were to be thenceforth maintained by the parish which borrowed the labourers. Of those that remained in the less industrious country there were many who eked out their wages by sharing in doles, by taking wood without leave, and by taking wild or half-wild animals against the law ; it was believed that they enjoyed great indulgence so long as they touched their hats to the squires.

The Government of England, like the Government of ancient Rome, had made the serious mistake of interfering systematically with the food market ;

offered five per cent. on the deposits, paying out of their own pockets the difference between this and the real market rate. A device which is to fix itself in a people's habits and affect its character needs permanence. The 'charity' of private persons is not so steadfast as the beneficence of the State. Seventy-seven savings banks, not calculated for permanence, were in existence when the Act was passed in the year of dearth and pain, 1817, to make the depositors creditors of the State, and to give them the use of the State's official regularity. It was wisely contrived that the depositors should know that between them and the London office there stood trustees chosen out of the squires whose names and faces they knew in their own counties.

this was sure some time or other to turn hunger and aches into resentment against the rulers ; and this resentment could in helpless minds be embittered dangerously by mischief-making advisers. There were a few wicked men animated by obscure hopes of rising on the ruins of the social fabric : for such fires as they were to light there was fuel prepared in the childishness of the poor.

Again, there were many men of some education who perceived that the Court and the Parliament were not duly open to the best thoughts and aspirations of Englishmen. The perturbations of these minds, displayed in public meetings, would not have been alarming to the wisest politicians had they been in power ; to the courtiers and ministers of the Regent they were formidable and exciting. Those who had shown high courage in dark years of Irish rebellion, of naval mutiny, of financial panic, and of armies squandered in vain, were not far from losing temper and judgment when an air-gun was fired at the Prince, or a thousand artisans set out from Lancashire with bread and blankets for a march to Westminster. Lord Castlereagh was of as dauntless and constant a spirit as any minister need be ; yet in his private letters to the Duke of Wellington, after the war was over, he expressed apprehensions about the uncertainties of public opinion which ill became the strongest man in the strongest ministry that had ever been known. Such treasonous plotting as there was ascertained to be, over and above what the Government spies invented and promoted, was certainly

not enough to justify the precautions taken. The ministers confounded it in their imagination with the designs of the Radical Reformers. Both plot and Radical Reform were dangerous only in so far as the working people were childish and the educated people unjustly excluded from power.¹

Mr. Rolleston, a magistrate of Nottingham, acting under old statute law, and directing the action of twenty cavalry soldiers, dispersed without a blow the only armed party of malcontents that appeared in England outside London in the two years of plots and fidgets. The only London riot was put down by Mr. Wood, the Mayor, with two gentlemen and five constables. These were the most considerable affairs of that which was mistaken by some men of rank for a revolution on the French pattern. In both these

¹ It seems certain that Brandreth, who was in 1817 hanged deservedly for using arms in an attempt at insurrection, was tempted thereto by Oliver, the spy employed under the Secretary of State. It is generally necessary for rulers to employ spies. It should be better known than it is to malcontents, that their worst enemies are not the gentlemen who rule them, but the mean persons who make money by egging them on to lawless acts and betraying them. Spies are generally in some dread of exposure, since their victims are avenged by advocates who search the spies by cross-examining; sometimes they are got out of the way by their employers before the trials. The Ministers of the last George had to enforce a law which punished a maker of false coin as fiercely as an armed insurgent. The Minister who controlled the mint employed an attorney, who offered rewards to any men who informed against any coiners and got them hanged. There is a case on record in which a poor man was taught and persuaded to make false coins by a man entering into a sort of partnership with him; as soon as he was at the work, his false partner brought a constable to him. The attorney was publicly rebuked by the judge, but seemed quite unaware that he tempted the vilest men to gain blood money. This case shows that the official Government can be and is controlled by the judges, who, though in some sense subordinate to the Home Office, are afraid of no authority but the two Houses of Parliament acting together.

little bursts of rebellion there were dangerous weapons in the hands of the misguided men, but there was not much courage, no mutual trust, no reliance on a good cause. Such little mobs were capable of mischief if let alone for a day or less than a day ; of this peril the nation had proof in the London riots of 1780. London was in 1780 tardily delivered from anarchy and terror by King George III. and his guards. In 1816, the first flames were trampled out by Mr. Wood, the chosen magistrate of the citizens, so ardent a Liberal that he became a favourite with the Radicals and an enemy of George IV.

Then, as in later times, the Home Secretary was in direct communication with all magistrates, both civic and rural, with the chiefs of the rural magistrates, who were called the Lords Lieutenant of counties, and with the twelve judges of the common law courts, who went on circuit through the counties and held regular assizes, or were sent expressly by special commission to towns in which the prisons were unusually crowded with rioters.

The ordinary administration of old familiar law was, as it seems to those who judge from the public records, sufficient for the maintenance of peace in Britain from the year 1816 to the end of the year 1819, although this period bears the stigma of rebellion coerced by tyranny. Citizens, not yet enfeebled by undue reliance on a professional police, were able to take the sting out of foolish neighbours. If at any time Lord Sidmouth, the Home Secretary of 1815-19, was in need of support,

he had recourse to the Prime Minister, and, through him, to his colleagues assembled in the Cabinet. Thus far his method was the same as that which is still in practice. The Home Office was, is, and ought to be, the focus of all information, public or secret, as to breaches of the peace either perpetrated or intended. It receives letters from local magistrates who are in doubt as to their duties, from judges who question the verdicts given by juries, from culprits who think themselves wronged, from timid people who scent danger, from penitents backing out of illegality, and from those who have employed spies in the good cause. It is served by men of experience, acuteness, and legal knowledge, who criticise and digest all such communications.

Lord Sidmouth departed from the regular course in so far as he engaged the two Houses of Parliament in assisting his office. In February 1817, at the beginning of the session, a secret committee of each House bestowed a fortnight on that which was the business of the executive ministry. This was a sign of weakness. However right it was to give full information to Parliament when asking for a change of the law and for more power to deal with sedition, it must be deemed somewhat derogatory to the Secretary's office that he should ask others to collect evidence and give him advice. Such committees are hampered by the emulation of rising politicians, and by the courtesy which restrains one member from correcting another's examination of witnesses. They

are courts without judges to control or advocates to enlighten them. They are like juries, but they were more like the grand juries which amuse themselves by listening to garrulous rustics, than the special juries which balance the arguments of pleaders. They had in the Liverpool days abundance of public spirit, intelligence, and industry, but they had no power unless they agreed with the minister who nominated them. Their reports would have had more weight if signed by all. But their composition forbade unanimity ; for decency required the admission of a Whig or two, and party spirit prevented Whigs from agreeing to Tory conclusions, or dissembling in subsequent debates their contrary opinion. Yet it may be held that in thus going into council with solid persons, of whom some were independent, and a few were real representatives of the people, the Tory ministers showed a certain modesty, and a deference to the unofficial classes, which ought to be set off against their cold rigidity.

Before the establishment of that second standing army which is called the police, the upholding of order was, much more manifestly than it has been since, the duty of unpaid citizens ; and the nation, although very imperfectly represented in municipal and parliamentary assemblies, was more independent of London. It was not a mere form of words that was used in a speech from the throne at the prorogation of Parliament, when the lords and gentlemen were told that they might go to their homes and resume their duties each amongst his own neighbours.

For more than half the year they were expected to govern rural districts as justices of the peace, and although they were not then charged with the enforcement of many new statutes, they bore some burdens which have since been transferred to professional officers ; whilst in the absence of minute law-making and of rapid communication with the capital, they had a considerable amount of indefinite power to be wielded at discretion. There were members of the House of Commons who were not in the commission of the peace ; but in a time of distress and turbulence the House was thinned by members who got leave to stay away from committees and debates that they might watch over their counties. Such men, at once legislators and functionaries, were good at ruling their neighbours in the country in so far as they were themselves schooled in senatorial transactions. They were generally qualified to play a conspicuous part amongst the magistrates of their shires. But there were many magistrates besides, who, tinctured with the learning of the bar or with the disciplined audacity of the army, were recognised without dispute to be fit leaders of the King's subjects. There were many others who knew nothing of cities or camps, but had found a perfect gallantry in the hunting field. Ignorant and prejudiced they might be, but once or twice a year they went to the county town and took part in quarter sessions business, and had glimpses of law at assizes ; and if, when gathered in small groups at their petty sessions or acting singly under their clerk's guidance, they committed absurdities,

they could be set right by the Court of King's Bench.¹

There were many parts of the island so far from any garrisons, that if disorder broke out either in a town or in a village, the magistrates of the district could not obtain the support of regular soldiers in time to prevent mischief. Supposing the parish constables to be too few, as they were sure to be, it was customary to call upon good subjects to take an oath and form into a temporary force without deadly weapons ; these were called special constables. Furthermore, every county had a volunteer regiment or two of mounted swordsmen, who were mostly yeomen or farmers. Of these many were freeholders and had votes for the shire ; many were also hunters of the fox and the hare. This yeomanry force was raised to defend the country against a French invasion ; it was found to be useful in maintaining order against foolish Britons ; it was a good force to use anywhere except in the big towns. Being composed of countrymen, it was strange to townsmen, and it was suspected of harbouring a prejudice against manufacturers. It was popular as a social institution ; men who hunted with the same hounds liked to drill and to drink together. In the dawning of liberalism these

¹ The Lord Chief Justice would always think twice before he lowered the dignity of the magistrates by cancelling a decision, for fear he should unhinge society by showing that a justice was fallible ; but it is on record that even in the Sidmouth reign of fidget, King's Bench overthrew a Western petty sessions bench which had refused a license to a tavern keeper for having no sign on his post, when he had sent his sign to be repainted.

amiable and clumsy regiments were unkindly designated 'Tory Clubs ;' and the weakest of prime ministers, Lord Goderich, allowed them to be reduced from 35,000 men to 13,500.

Both forces, the special constables and the yeomen, were under the orders of county magistrates outside, of mayors inside the boundaries of a corporate town. The magistrates and mayors were guided by a statute called the Riot Act, passed in 1714. They were by this law bound to be in the front of their forces, to see, to speak to the adverse crowd. They might not send a chief constable or a colonel of volunteers, vested with discretion, to pronounce offhand whether or not a crowd was to be broken up, and to act straightway on the decision. The reading aloud of the Riot Act in the hearing of the mob's leaders gave time for reflection. Bystanders were bound to stifle their curiosity and walk away, as soon as they saw a well-known gentleman or tradesman on horseback or at a window unfolding the symbolic paper : if they lingered they knew the peril.

Such were the arrangements made for suppressing the radicals ; and if they were adequate, as they appear to have been, it was a mistake to think the radicals dangerous, like the Frenchmen of the Revolution, to the fabric of society.

Writers of annals and editors of memoirs have followed one another in exaggerating the troubles of the first few years that came after the overthrow of Bonaparte. If those years were years of venomous discontent and gagged liberty, how is it that tradition

preserves no names of arbitrary officials ? The army was in 1817 occupying the north-east of France and conquering Central India ; it was not increased by new levies to contend with the radicals. There were squadrons and battalions quartered in barracks, not in forts, amongst millions of artisans in the manufacturing counties ; who can name a soldier that bullied artisans in obedience to Lord Sidmouth ?

The true charge against the radicals of that time is that they were vain men, and that they overvalued the franchise and made an idol of an imagined Parliament. The true charge against Lord Sidmouth and his colleagues is that they at once made too much of such danger as there was, and did not depute their ablest friends to explore the sources of discontent, and devise measures of social improvement ; that they were over-busy in governing and indolent in law-making ; that they at one time asked Parliament for more powers than they wanted, and at another time assumed a power which they should have obtained by constitutional process. If compared, as they should be, with the ministers who guarded the Hanoverian dynasty against Jacobites, they appear at once scrupulous and forbearing. If compared with Earl Grey's and Lord John Russell's governments, they seem fussy and weak.

In 1819 they thought it their duty to approve of the conduct of a magistrate who had erred in judgment. On August 16, some Lancashire magistrates, apparently without consulting the mayor of the town, occupied Manchester with a military force, in order to

make head against the radicals. Some inhabitants of Birmingham had just elected in an irregular and perhaps seditious manner a delegate or legislative attorney and representative. If other towns did the same, there would be a convention formed alongside of Parliament ; this savoured of revolution. Dwellers in towns and villages near Manchester came with flags and mottoes, but unarmed, to a small field on the outskirts of the city, and Manchester people gathered round them in a dense crowd which contained women and children. A squire called Mr. Hunt, whose noisy movements had been patiently watched by ministers, was to harangue the people from a waggon. There was good reason to believe that he would urge them to follow the example set at Birmingham. The delegate of Birmingham had been committed for trial on the charge of seditious language held at Stockport ; his coadjutor had been arrested on the same charge at a meeting held in London ; the constable who arrested both these offenders had been shot at by their avengers. There were certain clear and fresh precedents for allowing a peaceable meeting, for taking cognizance of the speeches made, and employing constables to apprehend the speakers who menaced the Government. Acting on precedent the Lancashire justices, after two days of deliberation, agreed to issue warrants against Mr. Hunt and his fellow-leaders, and to execute the warrants through constables at the commencement of the proceedings. Like the authorities who had watched the London or Smithfield meeting, they had a strong and sufficient body of regular horse and

foot artillery, some regular constables, a regiment of Cheshire yeomanry, forty mounted gentlemen of Manchester who were called yeomanry, and two hundred special constables.

With this force they could have held the field selected for the place of meeting ; they could have stopped the meeting altogether. What they did was somewhat feeble. As the chief constable told them that he could not execute the warrant without military support, they gave him the forty armed and mounted citizens to escort him : a force which, though it might have made and kept a lane through the crowd leading from the hustings to the house in which the magistrates were sitting, could not after the field was choked with people so pierce and divide the crowd as to give the constables freedom of movement. The forty rode up rather too briskly, and brandished their swords without reason. They entered the throng in no line or column ; they were at once disseminated ; they looked like captives ; it was thought necessary to rescue them. The regular squadrons were at hand. The colonel who led all the troops asked Mr. Hulton, the leading magistrate, what he was to do. Mr. Hulton, according to the evidence which he gave in a court of justice, was a little off his balance ; he thought that the mob was attacking the yeomen, and bade the colonel 'disperse the crowd.' This order was obeyed, for the soldier naturally smarted under the taunt implied in the hasty words 'Don't you see how they are attacking the yeomanry !' It seems certain that the scattered volunteer horsemen were not in

danger of violence. If there was no breach of the peace actually committed by the mob, if there was no one to be instantly rescued, the hussars should have been halted for the reading of the Riot Act, and time should have been given for quiet people to withdraw. It is conceivable that it may be necessary to move cavalry against an unarmed crowd ; but before doing so, it is as well to make sure that the crowd has open space behind it, and to give it a little time for running away. Mr. Hulton was not riding with the colonel, nor could he bear to stand at the window and see the troopers assail the poor folk. Here then was a lamentable blunder. The crowd which had absorbed the yeomen writhed and struggled, tumbled and bled under the threatening line of skilled swordsmen. One constable, one yeoman, four 'Radicals' were killed. About thirty 'Radicals' were badly hurt, either by swords or by trampling. In the afternoon three or four persons were wounded by the muskets of infantry employed to clear the streets. About ten of the radical leaders were arrested. Mr. Hunt suffered about three years of imprisonment, and was ascertained to be not an important person except in his own opinion.

This ill-managed affair was by all parties over-estimated. In a nation less secure, less good-tempered, less versed in law, it would have been thought a trifle. The stir that it caused in Parliament, the space that it fills in the annals, prove that England was in 1819 a happy country.

The ministers were advised by Lord Eldon that

the law did not give them power for dealing effectually with seditious assemblages. Three months after the breach of the peace at Manchester, they convened Parliament on purpose to enact new laws, and a month was thus spent.

Of six Acts then passed, there was one which for five years stopped the holding of political assemblies out of doors. Accordingly, in December 1820, when the liberal gentlemen of Edinburgh met to denounce the ministers and to ask the King to dismiss them, they met in a theatre, after being kept by their Lord Provost out of other buildings. The year 1820 was a year of loud and hot contention ; and till the Act expired there was an unchecked expansion of liberal ideas. The Act probably caused no discomfort to any one capable of forming a reasoned opinion on politics ; it certainly simplified the protection of towns from riot. The cause of reform gained by the lull. Reform was beyond the mental grasp of the orators who shouted, and of the illiterate people who listened, in field meetings ; and its later champions took it up when it had by lapse of time worn off the bloodstains of Manchester.

It has been held that this suppression of open-air gatherings was sure to drive men into secret and malignant conspiracy ; but public meetings are not prevented by being limited to indoor meetings, and bad men conspire in small rooms, whether they are or are not forbidden to talk to a crowd in a field or a market-place. There were bad men conspiring to kill the ministers just before they asked for power to

suppress out-of-door meetings, and after a few of them were hanged, criminal plotting ceased. In the summer of 1820, five Scottish towns were visited by judges, guided by an English lawyer who was to keep them right about the law of treason; and of several convicted prisoners three or four were put to death for rising against authority in the preceding winter. Their movement was called 'the Radical war.' It seems that their lives might have been safely spared, for they had only caused terror amongst Tories, and given trouble to volunteer soldiers. But the law was not strained against them, nor was any soldier trusted with summary jurisdiction. In the worst years Britain knew nothing similar to the suspension of civic rights which foreigners call a state of siege.

Of the six Acts which became law at the end of 1819 there was a second which was merely administrative and temporary. It empowered the magistrates of sixteen uneasy counties to search houses and seize arms found therein. This measure probably frightened those who were playing at civil war. Irish experience proves that serious plotters hide their weapons and elude the search.

A third Act was permanent in its effects, and it must be considered as a step taken towards that perfecting of authority in a compact state which is desired not only by Tories but by republicans and democrats.

It forbade civilians to perform military exercises. This general rule was promulgated at a time when the land was in no danger from foreign invaders; of course it was confirmed by any subsequent applica-

tion made for leave to form battalions, to arm and to drill them for national defence. A State may be so loose in texture as to be unable to maintain order ; in this case it must tolerate the banding together of citizens for mutual protection against robbers ; this has happened in California. But a compact State reserves to itself the right of authorising armaments. Unless specially provided for by statute, they are of the nature of sedition. The British State before 1819 had armed the London Artillery Company, the Scottish Archers, and many regiments of yeomanry. In later years it armed many myriads of volunteers, modifying by statute from time to time the old military legislation of Mr. Wyndham. The general prohibition of drill has not been relaxed in favour of Ireland, because Ireland has not yet outgrown the remembrance of the United Irishmen and other armed bodies who in the later years of the eighteenth century used their array to disturb the realm. The English artisans who were drilled in 1819 were probably inclined to overrate their soldierly attainments ; but this very conceit made them quicker to catch the fever of revolution ; it was prudent and right to forbid the mimicry of war, and to allow only processions. A brigade is not a good deliberative body, even when it is a sham brigade.

Lord Eldon, the Chancellor, famous for keeping litigants in suspense, was the author of one of the six Acts ; this was an Act for preventing delay in trials for misdemeanour. The term 'misdemeanour' was applied to many serious offences, and the legislators

of the Liverpool period were, with all their strictness, too merciful to stamp with the stronger term 'felony' such novel offences as were constituted by novel prohibitions ; they had already a list of varieties of the species 'felony' reckoned at two hundred. A contrivance for expediting trials does not appear to be an arbitrary or illiberal measure ; and a more delicate criticism than that which was bestowed on this ministry would have refrained from adding Lord Eldon's unexpected innovation to the four Acts introduced by Lord Sidmouth and the one that bore the name of Lord Castlereagh.

Thus far four Acts have been touched ; whereof two have been pronounced reasonable though not permanent ; a third necessary, laudable, and permanent ; a fourth permanent and harmless, but not important except as a sample of Lord Eldon's legislation. The remaining two were intended to check the utterance of opinion on paper, and to guard certain favoured habits of thought ; they caused irritation, and required in later years such erasure as new wisdom commanded and new security allowed. One of these increased the punishment inflicted on the publishers of blasphemous and seditious papers, technically called libels ; the other required the publishers of newspapers to give security beforehand for the payment of any fines that they might incur by uttering blasphemy or sedition. Between these two measures there was this similarity, that both concerned the liberty of the press, but they were unlike in so far as the one simply increased the power of judges after offences proved and verdicts

given by juries, the other marked out a whole class of traders as under suspicion, and made it hard for poor men to begin the trade of publishing news and comments on news.

Every set of men, or generation, must decide for itself what is blasphemy : for belief varies, the earnestness of belief varies, the sensitiveness of believers varies. The blasphemer is by most of his adversaries punished for a supernatural reason which need not have been alleged ; to true politicians he is only one of those who try to break the peace. The Tories went out of their way to punish the assailants of religion on untenable grounds. They asserted that Christianity was part of the English law.¹ They did not, it seems, read the Christian Scriptures so carefully as to observe that Christians were forbidden to resort to public tribunals for the settlement of disputes, and

¹ Parts of the law embody parts of the national ethics. Now national ethics are evolved from sundry elements, amongst which must be reckoned ecclesiastical doctrines : and of these doctrines some are grounded on texts of the Christian Scriptures. In disputes about the table of consanguinity or about divorce, legislators have gone straight to certain texts. In disputes about oaths and self-defence other texts have been used by persons whose principles are inconvenient for legislators. When a jurist, not being a Christian, frames a code for a mixed people, he cannot help being guided by some principles which can be traced to some traditions of the Christian nations. The Act of Uniformity, which gives a legal support to the ritual of the favoured clergy, is of course part of the law of England, and the rules thus fastened on the clergy are part of the law just as are the rules of the Bank of England ; they bind certain classes of persons under certain special conditions. Whereas the judges of the Eldon school seem to have meant to say that no one might ever impugn the truth or sanctity of any of the theological statements made by clergymen and lawyers. This is what they seem to mean by their maxim ; all that is certain about it is that they meant to give their support to the people whom Mr. Sidney Smith called ' holy bullies,' and to those whom Lord Dudley called ' methodistical Tories.'

that the King's Bench and Chancery must turn themselves into devout congregations or else forfeit their business.¹ It was manifest that rules of conduct could be taken from the Bible which judges and ministers broke at will, and some of which they could not help breaking. It was historically certain that communities which in obedience to Calvin punished Bible sins as crimes had outraged humanity and jeopardized authority. It was known to all men capable of understanding Blackstone's 'Commentaries,' that sundry rules took their origin from the clergymen who preceded jurists, and could be applied to modern use only by torturing the juristic mind; Lord Eldon would have been ashamed to make some of those laws which he expected the twelve judges to honour and enforce.

It was an intolerable hypocrisy that maintained Christianity as part of the English law; nor has any maxim so subdolous as this been devised to abridge the freedom of Britons. The method of coercion followed by the defenders of the Christian religion was this: The Home Secretary having read a printed paper and having judged it to be irreligious, consulted his colleagues, or at least the Chancellor, and then set in motion the barrister, who being a member of Parliament, but not in the Cabinet, bore the title of Attorney-General and was on the look-out for a place

¹ This difficulty was got over by one of those who at one time did duty as reasoners, by saying that the law courts of the State were really Church courts, because the State was only the nation, the Church comprised the nation, and Church was only another name for State; this is not the reasoning of lawyers.

on the bench of judges or on the presidential chair of the House of Lords.¹ This officer got the publisher of the obnoxious paper imprisoned, pending his preparations for the trial. Imprisonment might be avoided by getting one or two men to give bail for his appearance. The difficulty of finding friends who dared stake hundreds of pounds on this wager—for he who bails out a friend is betting so many pounds to nothing that his friend will not run away—pressed hardly on a poor man. In 1817 almost all the obscure men who were accused of evil publishing were held to bail or imprisonment, not because they were in the usual way committed by judges of first instance to take their trial at the time of jail delivery, nor because they were so dangerous to the King's peace as to deserve the Home Secretary's warrant and indefinite captivity without trial, but simply because Mr. Attorney declared that they were the enemies of the truth.² Of the poor men thus worried in 1817 one only is named in history, Mr. Hone; he was made famous by three indictments consequent on one 'information' laid by the Government's Attorney, and by three acquittals. His judges were three special juries composed of substantial London traders. He had been, in default of bail, imprisoned since May; he

¹ He could not belong to the class or profession of attorneys; this, like most British titles, is a puzzle and a paradox.

² The law which screened an Englishman from imprisonment without public accusation was suspended for a time by a special or administrative Act of Parliament whenever Ministers told Parliament that they were afraid of plots. Lord Sidmouth had the benefit of this suspension in 1817, without any overwhelming reason for the indulgence; but he did not abuse it.

was tried December 18, and the deliberations of the jury lasted fifteen minutes ; on the next day the second jury spent ninety minutes ; on the third day the third jury bestowed twenty minutes on the case.

The plan of defence had been suggested by Earl Grey, who in the House of Lords observed that Mr. Hone was under censure for doing just what a Cabinet Minister, Mr. Canning, had formerly done without censure. Accordingly, Mr. Hone, who employed no advocate, put his juries through a long and unedifying course of blasphemous literature, and showed them that he had sinned in good company. Mr. Abbott, a plebeian, a humble Christian, and a righteous judge, presided over the court on the first day, and did nothing but strengthen the cause of religion in controlling the prisoner and instructing the jury soberly and gently.

Mr. Abbott was a puisne judge of the King's Bench. His place was taken on December 19 and 20 by the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, Lord Ellenborough, who had ten years ago sat in the Cabinet as a Whig. This man resembled those judges who served the Stuart kings, and who believed it to be their duty to domineer over juries and obtain verdicts for the Government. He had lavished epithets on a reformer charged with fraud, the erratic sea captain Lord Cochrane, and had committed a sort of anachronism in sentencing him to the pillory ; he had once 'left for execution' a rustic felon convicted of a little theft because he lolled his tongue out of his

mouth during the trial. He liked having his own way in court too well, to be either a sound minister of the law or a persuasive champion of the faith. He took his colleague's place in trying Mr. Hone, on purpose to overawe jurymen and trample on heterodoxy ; he bit at the file of English obstinacy, and broke his teeth. After his double defeat he found himself coldly greeted by gentlemen in saloons. He wrote to the Secretary of State, for whom he had struggled, to say that 'the disgraceful events which had occurred in Guildhall' made him so ill that he was unfit for his duties in such critical times. He resigned his office, and his death was hastened by chagrin. This overthrow of a legal tyrant proved that the law of libel, as it had been shaped by the Whigs, gave juries enough power for measuring the guilt of a libeller by the moral sense of the generation. Mr. Hone had composed and printed things which good fathers of families would have burnt on the hearth ; but if he had been well affected to the Regency system, or if he had been employed by gentlemen authors, he would not have been imprisoned nine months by the Attorney-General. His sedition was the real object of assault ; his blasphemy was incidental.¹

The publisher of the 'Quarterly Review,' which was founded by Mr. Canning, a Tory minister, and

¹ When Lord Ellenborough charged the jury in Lord Cochrane's case, he is reported to have dwelt with blustering emphasis on the word conspiracy, as if it were a term of the same kind as murder or sedition or larceny ; 'conspiracy' was a hobgoblin for scaring juries, and the judge-made law of 'conspiracy' was a pitfall for British subjects.

contained all the best apologies for Tory measures, was also the publisher of Lord Byron's poems, which gave offence to Christians and were in vogue beyond all fresh literature ; it is not on record that Mr. Murray was threatened or rebuked by the Attorney-General.

In checking Mr. Hone's blasphemy, the Government employed an undoubtedly lawful weapon—the Attorney-General's *ex-officio* information ; it is not known whether it interfered with the trials by suggesting that Mr. Abbott should make way for a more efficient judge ; it can not be fairly blamed for Lord Ellenborough's ferocity. But there was employed in the same year against the sellers of printed papers, a novel and blameworthy contrivance, pompous in the inception, mean in detail. The Home Secretary wrote to the Lords Lieutenant of the counties of Britain to tell them that the justices of the peace might legally, and therefore must, repress the sale of wicked pamphlets. If a magistrate was informed by a sworn witness that there was in the neighbourhood some one vending seditious or blasphemous libels, he was to issue a warrant for his arrest and compel him to find some one to give bail for him, and in default of bail, send him to prison. Lord Sidmouth averred that the law officers of the Crown, that is to say, the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General, advised him that this was lawful. Accordingly, the magistrates assembled at quarter sessions in the county towns were apprised of their increased or discovered responsibility, and a few of them were

so dutiful as to lock up some poor hawkers. But it was forthwith stated in Parliament with irresistible authority by Earl Grey, Mr. Fox's political heir, and by Sir Samuel Romilly, the faultless law officer of the last Whig ministry, that Lord Sidmouth was usurping legislative functions.

Although his intention was good, and his action was more like a warning than a persecution, the Secretary was sinning against the constitution like James II. There were only two ways of declaring law: parliamentary enactment such as Mr. Fox's Libel Act of 1792, or judicial decision, such as Lord Mansfield's ruling in favour of a negro slave's liberation. The Crown lawyers were legitimately consulted by the executive ministers when the facts of a particular case made it to one not skilled in legal practice doubtful whether a known law could be put in force against one who seemed to be offending. But it was wrong to enlarge the jurisdiction of the magistrates without asking Parliament, and it was impolitic to govern the people by the agency of country gentlemen unless they were guided at every step by statutes. If it was necessary to watch pedlars who might be carrying tracts with their other wares, it was easy to pass an Act requiring them to take out special licences. To call upon them under actual suspicion to produce off-hand friends so rich as to be able to give security for their good behaviour or for their appearance in court, was of the nature of tyranny; for they were not only poor men, but poor wayfarers; they had no neighbours, and they could not be fairly expected to find in a strange

village strangers so charitable as to save them from going to prison. If they went to prison at all, they were by the imprisonment punished without open trial. Nothing but manifest danger of unusual breach of peace could justify imprisonment without open trial ; if it was not worth while to get the Habeas Corpus Act suspended for the coercion of pamphlet-mongers, neither was it worth while to play at the revival of Tudor and Stuart prerogative.

Although Parliament did not resent the usurpation, and the question was not raised in a superior court by suing a magistrate for illegal imprisonment, yet the authoritative remonstrances of the Whigs imposed limits on the Government and taught the village magnates to beware lest they should become persecutors. In later years the justices of the peace have been so carefully instructed by statutes, and by those law books which digest and interpret decisions, that they have not been dazzled by any phantom of censorship.

In a land of less moderation such ministers as Lord Sidmouth would have let loose an excessive flood of zeal, and would have been swept down by the back stream of impeachment. In Britain their mistakes fell short of crime, and as in their display of strength they stood in awe of their chief adversaries, they could without loss of dignity glide into a safer course and be at peace with their successors.

VII.

IN the reign of Charles II., Mr. Evelyn, one of the most enlightened gentlemen of the age, was shocked at the sight of houses rising in London which were built partly of foreign timber, since the nation was, he thought, impoverishing itself by losing the gold spent on the timber. The belief thus entertained by a patriot who was intimate with statesmen and tinged with science was one of the false theories which beset not so much the common people as their advisers. To keep gold in the country has seemed to many shrewd practical men the proper object of commercial policy. They are under at least two delusions. They think that gold is wealth, in such a sense that wealth which is not gold is valuable only in so far as it procures gold. They think also that commerce is a game in which nations are the players, and that one nation loses as another wins, just as one gambler empties and another fills his purse.

The plain truth about gold is accepted at first sight by boys and girls born into an age of science and inheriting some conceptions which were not within the birthright of Mr. Evelyn. But they hardly grasp the plain truth unless they examine the error which it cancels. Unless they have explored the various mistakes made in the four centuries of modern history, made again and again down to their own schooldays, they cannot be assured, by the mere

repetition of a formula, against a hasty assent to a plausible doctrine set forth by a 'practical man.'

The old mistake is likely to be in vogue still, for the writers in newspapers who record the ups and downs of stocks and shares announce such an event as the shipment of a ton of gold with earnestness and even anxiety, whilst they take no notice of the export of a million tons of coal ; and yet the coal goes away and passes elsewhere into smoke and ashes, the gold, unless the ship sinks in deep water, is sure to come back when persons resident in Britain find it worth their while to buy it. The ebb and flow of gold are undoubtedly of great importance to certain sets of men of business, men who are not producing commodities but playing at the game of speculation with various kinds of money; and the fortunes of these money-mongers affect, by the complexities of debt and credit, the fortunes of others who are increasing the commodities of the world by putting tangible and useful things in new places. The trade in gold, and the trade in silver too, are of importance to the offices of the State which have to remit money ; in war time to generals serving in lands where trade is in abeyance, or to allies who require subsidies and loans in the form of cash ; in time of peace to public servants residing in lands which have no complete bank system.¹ During the great French

¹ When the British Embassy was first established at Peking it was guarded by British policemen, whose pay taken in silver was fetched by some of themselves from an European money office in a free port. Bankers enrich the world in so far as they set men free from carrying money bags, for the able-bodied and trustworthy carriers can be employed more advantageously.

war, the English Government was an excellent customer for the money sellers. Some few honourable and keen adventurers knew how to buy gold just before the Treasury wanted it ; their gains were the Treasury's losses. But these losses, while sufficient to found the great financial houses, were not enough to make a serious breach in the State's solvency. Hasty bargainings for bullion were trifles compared with the mistakes made in borrowing. The loans were negotiated with a few citizens who were almost a privileged class.¹ To lend to the King was a favour granted at the expense of the nation. The lender bought for sixty pounds or less an everlasting transferable annuity of three pounds. If a victory was won, he could sell this annuity for seventy pounds or less. If he could contrive to hold it till Napoleon fell, he could sell it at eighty pounds or more. When peace was made quite sure by Bonaparte's imprisonment, the State should have bought some of its own annuities, but they had at once become too dear. If the State had borrowed at par paying five per cent. or six per cent., instead of borrowing at fifty or sixty, paying three per cent., it could have taken advantage of its higher solvency or better credit at the peace by lowering the rate of interest.²

Under Mr. Pitt's plan of borrowing at three per

¹ In 1807 Mr. Newland on retiring from the office of cashier to the Bank of England declined a pension because in his fifty years of service he had always been allowed a share of a Government loan and had made thereby 230,000*l*.

² This was done by the Treasury of the United States sixty years later.

cent., the higher the State's credit is the less profitable is it to pay off its debt by redeeming the annuities, and the nation whose productive industry is mortgaged to meet the claims of unproductive annuitants does not like to make a loss by investing on bad terms to get rid of its old bad bargains. As during the war there were great privations endured by weak creditors of the nation who would not afford to sell their three per cent. annuities when they were desperately cheap, so on the establishment of peace there were considerable gains made by the stronger creditors of the nation who had been able to wait for the necessary rise in the prices of such annuities.¹

The improvidence of the Government was mischievous, but it might have been more mischievous. It might have defrayed, partially, the expenses of the war, by issuing promissory notes without limit: a measure to which other great Powers have resorted. This would have tempted the ministers to still greater profusion, and the fulfilment of the promise contained in the notes would have been effected, if at all, only

¹ This term is used because the term 'funds' is less intelligible. 'The funds' means debts which the State enables the creditors to transfer in greater or smaller sums to other private persons, but does not itself pay: it pays a fixed interest, but it does not undertake to prevent the principal from falling in price; if it wants a new loan it wishes, but does not directly try, to raise the price of the funds. Besides the funds it owes an unfunded debt which it keeps from depreciation; it issues papers called *Exchequer Bills*, each for a certain sum; these are a sort of currency convenient for traders because the bills, if held for a very short time, nevertheless bear interest unlike most deposits in banks. The old Crown debts, before the reign of William III., were temporary, secret, and not transferable either wholly or in part from the original to a derivative creditor.

by funding the debt at the peace, and suddenly absorbing the capital then wanted by promoters of industry. From this evil course Mr. Pitt and his disciples were preserved by the Bank of England, an establishment which was not a part of the State's offices, but being created and from time to time modified by law, accepted concessions of privilege from the State and in its turn rendered service to the State. Between the sovereign and the corporation there was a sort of alliance. The Bank's character of integrity and prudence resembled the sacredness of a Church. Because the Bank allowed the Exchequer to overdraw its account, it was by a new statute of 1797 authorised to pay what was due to its customers in bits of paper ; its notes, or promises, were to be passed from hand to hand, not brought to its counter and exchanged for coin. These notes were not new contrivances, but they took a new character by becoming inconvertible. Before 1797 Bank of England notes were so used as to do away with the need of much gold coin ; after 1797 they were so used as to save the people within the island the expense of using any gold coin at all in dealing with one another. If any one offered a gold coin in payment it was gladly accepted, but the receiver if well informed sold it for paper money to some one who wanted it to send abroad. It was unlawful to send gold coin out of the country ; but this law, like many other rules of the restrictive policy, was far from easy to enforce. Coins were melted into bars and sent beyond sea to markets where they were demanded. But many coins were

hoarded, because the same insecurity which in 1797 caused a scramble for gold at the Bank's doors haunted the fancy of imperfectly informed Englishmen ; and these timid persons, though guarded by a thousand ships and a million of armed men, adopted the same device for packing up their wealth in a portable form that was customary in lands of tyranny and plundering. The gold coins were called guineas ; as fast as they came from the mint they were absorbed. If any one wished to go abroad he could buy guineas with paper-money ; but they were costly. Gold coins were to private persons, like gold ornaments, articles of luxury. To merchants occasionally, to the State perpetually, gold or bullion was an article of necessity. Of the gold exported by merchants, by the State, and by private travellers, a great part was no doubt withdrawn from circulation and hoarded by private persons dwelling within the range of the armies.¹

As the war went on the State's credit was lowered,

¹ In the latter years of the great war there was much more of the precious metals used in the arts, mostly for making spoons, forks, and the like, than in an equal number of years in the next generation ; it is supposed that the farmers and small traders then began to use silver at table, partly because they were excited by high prices, partly because they were afraid of the French. Steel forks held their ground in taverns till the peace ; in the reign of George IV. or William IV. certain novels were called silver fork novels, because they dwelt on this symbol of gentility.

The scarcity of gold in the times following the dislocation of the Roman Empire may be accounted for partly by terror and flight after hoarding. In Germany hoards dating from the 'Thirty Years' War are discovered here and there. In Lucknow it is believed that there is treasure buried by the insurgents of 1857, who, when the streets were altered by the conquerors, could not find the sites of their abandoned houses.

not because it had issued papers containing promises to pay coin, nor because it found it impossible to buy bullion, but because its armaments increased, pensions due to widows and cripples multiplied. Portugal, Spain, Austria, had to be equipped for campaigns, and fresh loans were needed every year not only to extend the purchasing power beyond the reach of the revenue drawn from taxes, but also to pay the interest on former loans. Meanwhile the Bank of England, selling at rising prices all the coin paid into its till, and being saved the cost of procuring coin to meet the holders of its notes, was paying higher dividends to its shareholders or proprietors. It looks as if the Bank thrived at the expense of the State. One is tempted to think that the State might have kept for itself such profits as the Bank made by issuing inconvertible paper. But such profits disappear in the great concerns of a belligerent. The modern British State wisely distrusted its own clerkly virtues. On the one hand it warranted the Bank against external dangers of rapine and revolution. On the other hand it leant on the Bank's conscience.¹

The indulgence granted to the Bank was called 'restriction,' because payment in coin was restricted or forbidden by Mr. Pitt's Act of 1797. Return to the cashing of notes was called 'resumption.' By the law, as it was modified on revival, resumption was to begin half a year after the ratifying of a treaty of peace. Bullion began to flow steadily into the Bank

¹ The Bank buildings have been garrisoned by the Royal army ever since the 'No Popery' or Gordon riots of 1780.

from July 1815, since all ports were open and the pent-up desire for British wares could be gratified by purchases. This influx went on for two years. In 1817 the mint, which had coined no gold since 1813, issued about 4,000,000 of pounds in the new forms of the sovereign and the half-sovereign, substituted for the guinea and the half-guinea ; not because the nation was richer, though it was richer, than in the preceding years, but because gold was so cheap that there was no reason for altogether abstaining from the enjoyment of so handsome and convenient a kind of money. But the sovereigns went away for a time, like their predecessors the guineas. They were bought by the King of France, and turned into coins bearing his name. Therefore the British Legislature, after painful inquiry and fifty debates, resolved again to put off the resumption. However; the Bank was not strictly forbidden to pay in gold, and instead of waiting, as it was allowed to wait, till the 1st of May 1822, it resumed cash payments exactly one year sooner.

In a civilised country the appetite for gold coin does not grow by being indulged, but is soon satisfied in quiet times. Recent experience seems to show that if a few bank notes had been known to have been cashed on the day after it was ascertained that Bonaparte was a prisoner, most holders of similar papers would have been content to keep them uncashed.

The discussion of bullion was no waste of time. Sound doctrine about money had been taught by Mr. Horner in 1811 ; he was dead before any considerable

number of Parliament men learnt his doctrine ; he was a Whig and a theorist. His theory of bullion in relation to paper money was not to be thrust aside like other doctrines taught by Whigs, for there was one Tory who grasped it. Mr. Peel, who had been a subordinate secretary in the Liverpool ministry, so mastered this theory, that he was able to drench his former colleagues with it ; he was so firmly convinced of its truth, that he upheld it against the authority of his father, the first Sir Robert Peel, a manufacturer who proved his practical knowledge by gaining in business some millions of pounds. It took eight years to bring the young Tory to a proudly ingenuous acknowledgment of the Whig's guidance. For the country it was a great windfall, this arrival of a teachable statesman. Happy is the nation which has rulers ready, but not eager, to own themselves in the wrong, and maintaining authority unimpaired by the confession of error.

VIII.

THE things mentioned in histories are for the most part things which break in upon the even tenor of social life, and in years of peace with other nations a people's chronicle is made up to a great extent of incidents separated from one another in time and in place, but by a narrator so thrown together as to make patches of some magnitude. Thus is the reader

misled into a general impression of disease, particularly in years such as the five or six years that followed the treaty of Vienna. Repeated complaints of pecuniary trouble, several riots, one or two plots, a few serious wrongs inflicted by authority, a good many disappointments of reformers, fill some space in books compiled from official documents, and affect the mind with a somewhat dreary feeling. And it has been the fashion to dwell on the somewhat petty scandals and distresses of this period as if it had been on the whole an unprosperous and shabby time. He that fails to correct the histories by reference to biographies is sure to think less cheerfully than he should think of the England of Lord Liverpool's administration.

A good deal of the disappointment which clouded the early years of peace might have been assuaged by comparing the state of England with the state of other parts of Europe. But one of the effects of the long war was a special insulation. The grumblers made too much of the meanness, the corruption, the prejudices, the trickeries, which were discernible at home ; they knew not how far more happy they were than the Italians or the Germans. Their masters underrated the intellect of foreigners, and the treasures of thought heaped up beyond the narrow seas. Both sets of men were sorely addicted to rule of thumb, and so far as they were represented by well-known writers and speakers, they seem to us, judging from a distance, a little too much like old maids dwelling in a small town.

Those who lead and those others who wish to lead a nation ought to inspect and appraise it by comparing it with another nation, a live neighbour. For this critical meditation the Radicals of the Liverpool period were too ignorant and vain, the philanthropists were too much fettered by interpretations of sacred books ; the men of letters were for the most part too idle, garrulous, and unscientific ; the administrators of justice and commerce were too much clouded by the conceit of recent success.

The England of Adam Smith, Dr. Johnson, and Burke had been more reasonable and sound than the other European nations of that age. Since then it had, in spite of war and prodigality, improved its habits of life without forfeiting any good thing in its law ; nevertheless it was for the time unable to profit to any great extent by the political discoveries obtained since the change of ideas called by the French the Revolution. The English gentlemen who ruled the United Kingdom through the Liverpool ministry were the heirs of men who fearlessly took from and gave to their French rivals many opinions, tastes, and fashions ; for in those earlier days the wars between England and France were the pastime of courtiers, the opportunity of merchants, the harvest of honour for soldiers and seamen, but not the struggle or the rancour of estranged societies. In the eighteenth century, no sooner was peace made than the freshest utterances of Paris and London were heard reciprocally ; the differences, expressed simultaneously, made a harmony. Whereas in the time of Napoleon, and

for some years after his ruin and death, the Briton, if he learnt anything of his enemy, learnt very little but a new touch of luxury. He listened to one clever lady who talked French, and had quarrelled with the emperor.¹ He was slightly acquainted with the books of a rhetorical writer who gained some fame under the Empire and then served the Bourbons.² But he knew nothing, indeed he thought it wrong to know anything, of the new institutions which, in spite of wicked wars, had given a new and solid happiness to the French people. He did not know that the Roman Catholic religion had been purified and strengthened, that the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy had coincided with the recovery of free speech, free research, generous philosophy, sound history, and a literature which combined warmth with correctness. Except the faded flowers of bygone seasons, nothing that was of much value came from France to England. It was presumed, without gainsaying, that the morality of France was still what it had been in the reign of Louis XV., the reign in which the two societies knew each other fairly well; only it was believed almost universally—believed by the Whigs and the philanthropists hardly less than by the Tories and the sportsmen—that, over and above the ancient frivolity, a whole great people was infected with the malignity of Jacobins. Even the enlightened and the tender-hearted kept up after the great war the antipathy which they inherited from Dr. Johnson, from

¹ Madame de Staël, a Genevese: by language, French.

² M. de Chateaubriand.

George III., from Burke, and from Nelson. Even the reformers, groaning under absurdities and striving for remedies, looked to the United States of America, where all that was not English was disorderly, instead of looking to the one only State reconstructed according to doctrine and exhibiting the results of jurisprudence.¹

Even in physical science it was a point of honour to recognise as little as possible any continental discovery. Fortunately, Dr. Franklin had been a colonial Briton when he founded the theory of electricity, and the growing art of the chemist could not be choked by political prejudice. It was at this time that discoverers enjoyed even in Great Britain a comfortable freedom of thought within boundaries which they were not yet tempted to climb over. It was in Yorkshire that a practical land-surveyor bearing the plain name of Smith made out for himself an English series of overlapping layers of soil, called in geology, rocks ; and fortunately, the island was in itself sufficient to represent general if not universal stratification. The enlargement of mind which the first glimpses of this theory never fail to give to young intelligences, was

¹ There was a French Swiss, M. Dumont, who was in intellectual communion with Sir James Mackintosh, and served as a conduit of reason between the island and the continent. Hardly any Whig family escaped the prevalent insularity. Lord Holland, as the nephew of Mr. Fox, was naturally the friend of the great nation, and the house of Lansdowne was connected with it. But it seems that there was very little correspondence, and even less intermarriage, between the families of the Frenchmen who had lived in England as exiles and the English families which had given them hospitality. Even the ancient commerce of society between the Scots and the French had ceased.

for a few years not traversed by the fear of religious error. As an applied science this new branch of natural history fell into lucky conjuncture with the enterprise of the miner and the engineer. The kindred science of comparative zoology was fetched, better late than never, from the great mind of a French senator, M. Cuvier. The art of metallurgy was about this same time advanced by Englishmen who had studied in the Saxon school of mines ; so that the truly German genius of Werner was enlisted in the service of a people which was then more practical than the Germans. The dislike which Britons probably felt for the Frenchman who disputed with Cavendish and Priestley the honour of founding chemistry on a correct analysis of water, seems not to have ranged so far as to bar the calculating processes and the deductive reasonings of such Frenchmen as Laplace and La Grange. Great Britain possessed amongst its fairly independent establishments the University of Cambridge and the University of Edinburgh : in these societies, if nowhere else, the insular spirit of antipathy to new-fangled foreign devices was so far subdued, that geology and astronomy, apart from speculation as to primordial causes, had swift growth and liberal encouragement.

But there is this great difference between the Liverpool period and the later time : that those intellectual persons in the island who were concerned with statesmanship, law, and literature, were almost unconscious of the growth of the progressive sciences, except when some very glaring invention, such as a gas lamp, or

a lightning rod, or a diving bell, or a steam-boat, compelled them to recognise the theories out of which came the novel appliances. A momentary contemplation of a philosophical toy, whether useful or only amusing, was vouchsafed by the orator, the poet, the antiquary, the jurist; but it would appear from the records of the age that these were mere diversions, not modifications of thought. As in a Mahometan country despots and their servile delegates accept with a sort of condescension a machine or a mode of locomotion, and treat the foreigner who introduces it as one that is perhaps just a little above a hired juggler or dancing girl, so did the men of letters and the wordmongers of professional life deign to applaud Sir Humphry Davy the discoverer of new metals, or Sir Charles Bell the anatomist of nerves, not dreaming of any philosophy that should indicate a necessary connection between the fixed humanities and the moving sciences.

The islanders, who shrank from what they called the Jacobinical or anarchical tendencies of foreign reasoners, clung with narrow minds and coarse tempers to the gnarled and knotted peculiarities of their political and legal system. Processes and customs which involved needless friction were not only defended, but admired and almost worshipped on the ground that they were English. If there was anything English which foreigners ventured to think was somewhat barbarous, it was all the more esteemed by the loyal subjects of George. Mr. Cobbett, a peasant of narrow mind and a student of American habits,

Mr. Sydney Smith, a Whig and the most popular spokesman of the enlightened gentlemen educated at Edinburgh, were the most prominent and persevering assailants of British idols. The one by force of positive homely argument, the other by analytic wit, both by their high animal spirits, were well qualified to shame the educated classes out of absurdities. But neither of these writers, nor any one of the reformers of the Liverpool age, had such depth and range of mind, or such moral enthusiasm, as to go far towards modifying the national character. No courtly prelate, no arbitrary judge, no pompous lord lieutenant, no titled warrior, no tuft-hunting pedant, no fashionable patronage-monger, could in those days be made to listen respectfully to a mere reasoner. And it was by such men of the world as these that the Liverpool government was upheld ; and the Liverpool government was the symbol and the pillar of insularity. Lord Eldon, Lord Ellenborough, even the Duke of Wellington, seem to have been as indifferent to the currents of thought setting from France, from Germany, and from the Catholic Church, as the Roman historians and lawyers of the first Christian century were to the ferment of the Christian faith.

IX.

A NATION presents itself to the outer world as a sort of person. The world contemplates a fictitious person, and calls it England. Chroniclers state that England chooses, acts, commands, when two or three Englishmen have been signing papers in the name of their King. Reflective historians follow the chroniclers; and the undesigned insincerity of polite literature shapes their reflections into forms which are too neat, too compact, for an interpretation of anything like a tenth of the phenomena presented by the documents and traditions. Conscious to some extent of this inadequacy, modern historians add to their narratives of a State's doings certain accounts of manners, of religious disputes, of books and works of art; and these accounts lie apart, as digressions, from the records of war, diplomacy, and debate. Sometimes they are ashamed of the performers on their stage, being quite aware that vanity and intrigue are conspicuous in the performance. Accordingly, they tell the reader that, whilst demagogues are strutting, and secretaries of state are explaining, better men than demagogues and secretaries of state are doing better things. And unquestionably the most docile and idle of readers must observe that of the men who have done great things for mankind many, perhaps the most part, have followed their own pursuits outside the lines on which warriors and politicians have

moved ; that only now and then does a talker such as Socrates, an artist such as Michael Angelo, a writer such as Milton, stand amongst the athletes who strive before the people ; that the activity of workers not consulted but protected by ministers and warriors is for the most part more innocent, and is to some extent more fruitful, than the activity of ministers and warriors. In so far as history either neglects, or relegates to an appendix, the more excellent citizens who lie behind the court and the camp, history fails to give an image of a people.

History contains periods in which the rulers and the lawgivers are of poor and dry mind compared with some of the private citizens. Such was the period of the narrowest Tory government, from about the year 1810 to about the year 1822.¹ In these years the finest intellects and the best hearts had some influence, but less than usual, on the Parliaments and the public offices. In covenanting for the stoppage of slave-trade, in ruling India and Java, in setting science to the useful works of engineers and miners, in arranging the gold and silver trade ; in experiments on prisons, on village schools, on the extinction of disease, on contrivances of humble thrift ; in attempts at discovery of new seas and islands ; in offering the rites and the books of the Christians to barbarous tribes ; these years bore witness that the rich were not mastered by fashion ; that the employers of labour were not

¹ Such a statement as this must be understood to have no pretence of scientific precision : the selection of epochs is unscientific, yet it is not arbitrary.

benumbed by timorous selfishness ; that the spirit of improvement was not quenched by prejudice. At the same time, finance, trade, and law were by conceit and sophistry kept almost entirely out of the reach of citizens then living, who, if the opportunity had been given them, could have forestalled much of the good work done by a later set of reasoners. Such ' men of the morrow ' as then got a hearing seem at this distance less considerable than certain others of their own time. Thoughts, little heeded when first uttered, affected men's minds twenty or forty years later, and there were influences, unknown to the rulers, unknown also to the noisy reformers, which were shaping the characters of young men. The litigious protest against routine and bigotry was kept up by clever people who were themselves too worldly, too superficial, and too vulgar for the best hearts even of that generation ; to take them for representatives of their period is a serious mistake. The goodness, actual or possible, of the British nation could not be measured even by Mr. Brougham or Mr. Sydney Smith, much less by the Radicals.

Behind these combatants stood Mr. Coleridge, who figured in the later years of his life as a sort of prophet, testifying that man does not live by reason alone, and failing to teach anything that could at the time be translated into plain life.¹ Had his fragmentary books been read, or his uncouth monologues listened to by men of his own age concerned in affairs, he would have seemed to them, not without

¹ To disparage reason, he called it by another name, ' understanding.'

cause, a solemn mountebank ; nor is it easy for any modern politician to explain the texture of what he called his philosophy. But it seems to be proved by competent witnesses that he saved some of the nobler spirits from a too prosaic view of humanity, and, although unintelligible to foreigners, rescued his admirers from insularity. His position in English literature is that of a truly poetical writer of verse, not mastered by metaphor nor led into falsetto by rhyme. In politics he helped men to be reformers without being Whigs or Benthamites.

Mr. Bentham had begun, forty years before the battle of Waterloo, the career of an enthusiastic and unwearied reasoner, examining secular institutions, and the theories fabricated by their optimising defenders, and not troubling himself with that which interests modern science, the historical account of ethics and law. He began by conforming to the rules of taste, obeyed in the eighteenth century. In his middle and later life these rules were in abeyance, and he, like many dissimilar writers, indulged in eccentricities of style. Unlike most of the tasteless writers, he drove from him by faults of expression his own countrymen more than foreigners. Like the Quakers, he found some favour with great people, not Whigs or Tories, or even Britons. He had at home a good many earnest disciples, no popular following. His politics were so passionate that he was not content with the virtue of Sir Samuel Romilly, so unrepresentable that he was treated disdainfully by some mob orators. He was innocently vain, but he wasted no

time on vain men.¹ Whatever he devised and recommended lay within the range of legislation ; but the legislators who have executed his plans were so far his juniors, that though he toiled for more than fifty years he lived long enough only to see them let loose on the land of promise. That their improvements in the framing of statutes and the administration of justice were due entirely to his teaching was avowed by Mr. Albany Fonblanque, a journalist, who was not an imitator of his style. Many millions of human beings might have lived less pitiable, had his schemes been accepted and worked out by the time that he had become the teacher of Mr. James Mill, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Brougham and Mr. Austin. Reform of Parliament was necessary for giving his opinions fair play, but those who were to be the authors of the Reform Bill did not know that they were going to open the door to the assailants of legal superstition.

Two men have now been named who confessedly strengthened and widened some of the minds that were to render speculation into definite purpose in a later period of comparative freedom ; these two have been chosen out of many whose books and personal influence are noticed with more or less gratitude in important biographies. These quiet efforts of the intellect are discovered in the accounts which men later born have given of impressions made on their early manhood. The contrast between the England of 1845 and the

¹ He befriended with sympathy and bounty a clergyman who, having taken up the wrongs of poor weavers, his parishioners, had been prosecuted and impoverished.

England of 1815 becomes less glaring when the leaders of the later generation explain their mental phases ; this, however, they do not do till a third generation questions them.

It is customary to make too much of eloquence. Apart from character, eloquence is not very highly esteemed by men of strong head. Mr. Robert Hall, the most celebrated preacher in the war-time, Mr. Edward Irving, the most celebrated preacher of the next period, were meteors rather than stars. The character of Mr. Pitt, the less majestic but more genial character of Mr. Fox, expressed themselves in luminous oratory which had a fine afterglow ; and the Castlereagh Parliaments strained at similar effects. This period, as it is described in books, contained several ambitious speakers, and kept up a steady lamentation over the decay of senatorial eloquence. Whenever Mr. Plunkett spoke he was said to remind his few listeners of dead orators, and when he ceased to speak his name in its turn was used to admonish a rising rhetorician. When there was enough to stir indignation, as in the year 1820, rhetoric grew out of the topic ; but it was somewhat artificial and sterile. The wrongs of the Roman Catholics were the only durable fuel for the scintillations of the high gentlemen such as Sir Francis Burdett or the Marquess Wellesley, and when they spoke of these wrongs they addressed small parties of loungers, and their declaimings were reported in journals too dear to give them wide reverberations. Yet oratory, like boxing, was fashionable. At the English universities, and even at a public

school, lads, without the guidance of teachers, debated questions of politics, morals, and taste ; and these mimicries began to savour of reality in the days of Mr. Canning's ascendancy, when the doors of Parliament were creaking to the winds of public spirit.¹

At the bar, and even on the bench, there was a good deal of verbal drapery worn in compliance with fashion. It had not yet been discovered that the beginning and end of forensic speech is statement, and that the directness and the personal dignity which prevail with judges and with intelligent jurymen need no embellishment. The most brilliantly successful advocate, Mr. Scarlett, was not a wise man. It may be conjectured that many barristers, who in due time became judges, were secretly ashamed of their coarse art and rusty tools. To such philosophers as inherited the thoughts of Plato, the English and the Irish, perhaps not the Scottish, advocates were as distasteful as demagogues ; but they admired, or professed to admire, one another. When they got seats in Parliament, they were generally thought to fail as politicians ; and hence it has been inferred that forensic and senatorial eloquence are widely separated varieties of one species. It is of more importance to bear in mind that the advocate of strong character, with an habitual preference of truth to falsehood, has an advantage over another senator unversed in law business ; that the lawyer who fails in the House of Commons, fails because he has less worth. Be this as it may,

¹ Mr. Canning liked taking a student with him to the House of Commons, and treating him as one capable of watching the business.

it is certain that the statesmen of the Reform time were superior, and were not indebted, to eloquent barristers. Furthermore it is to be observed that British India was regulated and purified by men who used copious but measured language on paper, subjected to office criticism, and escaping the fever of the assembly.

As oratory is then precious when it enables a man to give the best of himself and to appear as courageous and wise as he really is, so is the player's art noble in so far as it sets forth, and by contrast enhances, sentiments and emotions which in domestic life are either suppressed by convention, or, if laid open, yet lack the expansive sympathy of an audience. Households are warmed and cleansed by the pity stirred in many hearts at once by the artists of the theatre. Poetry, not in the most subtle form, but living in eyes and voices, is in a playhouse a sort of heat ; it is reflected from a semicircle, and each spectator helps to convey it. Laughter, the antidote for cant, the charm against madness, is generated on the stage. The graciousness of the human body, when manifest in a lady such as Mrs. Siddons or Miss O'Neill, draws some of the most virtuous of men and women into worship ; and the human race is exalted and endeared by the looks and the tones of beautiful persons who attune themselves to glorious fiction. The stage had more power in 1815 than in later days. Not that there were living dramatists of signal merit ; for scholars such as Mr. Milman, and rhymers such as Lord Byron, failed to attract crowds to theatres, although they

ransacked literature for dramatic materials ; and the failure was such, that people consoled themselves with the paradoxical view, that a good dramatic poem was to be read, not acted. In default of new plays the town was fain to be content with old plays, in which there were characters so life-like as to speak out of one age into another ; and, as in France, works that had been extant one or two centuries were put on the stage with zeal which was in some measure patriotic if not akin to bigotry.

There were many households of educated citizens not in communication with the stage. Of these many were distant from town, and the costliness of travelling kept young people from trips to town ; many were under that restraint which was imposed first by Puritans or disciples of Calvin, then by Methodists and by evangelical members of the Established Church. These families, which were the strongholds of scruple and of benevolence, had few enjoyments. They shrank from games of chance, from horse races, and the coarser pleasures of the aristocracy ; their music was timid, their gardening was not enlivened by emulation, they read theological poetry dutifully. Not only did they abhor theatres, but they abstained from the stimulating of the mind which others got from the domestic performance of comedy.¹

¹ Insular prejudices did not prevail so far as to exclude German music ; the works of Mozart and Haydn were accepted, those of Beethoven were just then being discovered, by English people. Hardly any music of durable quality was composed by Britons. Cathedral choirs were neglected. Ballad singing was popular ; the desire of harmony was satisfied

Excitement of some kind moved even these sanctuaries of virtue. After such preludes as were played by Mr. Thomas Campbell, the author of a few hundred lines which united the charms of taste and emotion, and by Mr. Walter Scott, whose long narrative poems rang with high sounds of faith and honour, they were, in the year of Bonaparte's fall, thrown headlong, with the fashionable world, into a new literary transport.

In 1814 was published a work of fiction, resembling, so far as prose can resemble verse, Mr. Scott's heroic legends of North Britain. This book, 'Waverley,' was the first of a set of books which must be acknowledged at least as a set-off to the supposed signs of the age. Gloom, depression, vulgarity, peevishness, seem to pass away from the images which history has shaped of the illiberal aristocracy and the disappointing peace. The joyfulness, the generosity, the refined sensibility of the British families are revealed in the outbreak of readers clamouring for Waverley novels. No works of fiction so glowing and so pure, so full of animal spirits, so free from morbid passion, had ever come in such rapid succession to so great a multitude of purchasers.

The wonder and the delight of Queen Elizabeth's subjects, who by thronging the playhouse made the fortune of a magical playwright, had affected the national character.

The political enthusiasm of Puritans and Cava-

by glees and madrigals. On the whole, it was not a musical nation in 1815.

liers, the nobleness of the first race of modern English gentlemen, must be ascribed not to sacred and classical books only, but also to the imagination which flashed from the stage of Shakspeare. And the Britons of this later time were made more sweet in heart by 'the author of Waverley.'

The dramatist of 1600 had never been approached by a rival till 'the author of Waverley' began his novels. As the one tried in the first instance to fill his theatre, so did the other make it his main object to form a landed estate and set his sons amongst the aristocracy. Beyond the inevitable desire that a strong mind has to utter itself, there was no systematic purpose in that series of plays or in this series of novels. But the most considerable sets of families were in each case quickened and sweetened by a fresh influx of thoughts. New characters were added to the stock of characters which survive the passing generations. Forms of virtue were unveiled; and men of scruple no less than men of the world became acquainted with human beings in whom they were forced to take an interest. If the stage was to cease to do more than provide a mere frivolous pastime, the loss could now be put up with; since the novel henceforth was the fountain of those emotions which minister to the intellect. London would have been more polished had there been a permanent traditionary theatre satisfactory to people of taste. The counties gained by the substitution of the circulating library. In country houses the pleasure of reading was the only pleasure that could compete with field sports.

Stupidity or dulness could be lessened only by some excitement. The only literature that could excite was the romantic narrative. By the spirit of romance the sense of duty was heated. Heretofore the fictions tolerated in virtuous parlours had sounded like the purrings of tame cats. In the Waverley period there was heard twice a year a brave man's trumpet, and no one was afraid to listen.

Of the imaginative literature issued in the same years with the Waverley novels there was a considerable proportion that affected sooner or later the character of the people; it was far more effectual than the contemporary music or painting. That which was first in quality, the poetry of Mr. Keats, ripened in a corner, and dropped seeds which twenty years later bore such fruit as no other nation could match. The living poet whom Mr. Keats looked upon as one advanced into a region not yet explored by himself, Mr. Wordsworth, had ceased to throw out anything fresh or spontaneous; but by persevering iteration he was slowly compelling a few readers to think aright of the discoveries which he had made in his youth.¹ He taught them to recognise beauty in the tranquil affections of plain folks. If he could have constructed a story he would have anticipated by twenty years some of the gentler and more pathetic

¹ The latest of his fresh and genuine poems was written on the death of Mr. Fox in 1806. In after years he was straining himself to work out in verse a treatise on scenery, which, as a cure for mental distemper, he overvalued. Yet he must be held to have done much through life to foment that worship of landscape which became dominant. To Mr. Keats he appeared as an interpreter of pain and compassion.

chapters of the Waverley novels ; for want of animal spirits, humour, and vivid memory, he could not make much of old tales ; of modern life he had a peasant's knowledge modified by newspapers. No writer with so slender an outfit, toiling so long with so much failure, has ultimately won so much gratitude for the giving of pure pleasure.¹

Lord Byron, a poet who in his own lifetime gave sensations not to Englishmen only but to Frenchmen and Germans, carried to the utmost the English foible for hasty and reckless composition. In this he represented, but did not lead, his contemporaries. He was the only man of fashion who loudly proclaimed rebellion against Church and State formalism. As he was not a pattern Englishman, he did not gather round him a company of liberal reformers ; but he was able to keep up a running fire against tyranny and hypocrisy, and such an ally must be taken into account. If in domestic affairs he forfeited a right to be heard by discreet senators, yet he aided the liberals who encouraged the Greeks to strive for liberty ; and he is, if not the most meritorious, at least the most widely known, of those Britons who have deserved well of foreign nations.

Similar to Lord Byron in unmeasured fluency and literary self-indulgence was Mr. Shelley ; in life far less popular, after death more honoured, and perhaps more profitably imitated, he too kicked against the

¹ Sir Walter Scott admired the 'Feast of Brougham Castle:' and his choice deserves attention. The characteristic doctrine is in this 'ode' blended with eloquence ; the poet writes swiftly and warmly about the training of nature ; 'nature' here includes human hearts.

customary restraints of the English gentry, and contributed not a little to the stock of indignation which was gathering for the day of freedom.

X.

GENEROUS impulses, such as indignation against a distant culprit, or a desire to uphold the champion of a good cause not our own, are of less popular prevalence than grief. That which draws together the readers with the unlettered, the mistress with her handmaid, the orthodox with the dissenter, must be the death of some one worthy of love. In the great war it had once happened that a death was felt by all Britons capable of feeling anything beyond animal instincts. A very wide-spread imaginative belief that the country was to be saved by Nelson had displayed itself on his last departure from home ; it had passed into a sorrow which may be, as fairly as any recorded sentiment, called national, when the news came that he had perfected his work, and had died in unquenched ardour of love and duty. Twelve years after the burial of this most dear Englishman died another of those true children of nature who, being almost above rules, awaken a tender interest in the minds of people who themselves live by rule.

The nation which had made the most of King George III. and had tried to see his goodness in his

sons and daughters, clutched eagerly at the first bloom of moral beauty that could be discovered in the stem of royal inheritance, and through a haze of rumour illuminated by flashes of scandal discerned a true daughter of England in Charlotte, the one child of the Regent. How playful, brave, and shrewd she was could not be known at the time, and was not known till sixty years afterwards. How she had escaped evil influences could not be guessed. At all events she was the future sovereign, set high to be thought about, believed to be worthy of homage, the one lady in all the land whose character was a matter of concern to all good subjects. She was married to a young man chosen carefully by the Regent's advisers out of the well-born Protestants to whom the choice was by law restricted. Her husband was Leopold, a German. Fortunately, she had lit upon a family in which the earnestness of the Germans was combined with a sort of good sense not so commonly found among Germans. It was reasonably hoped that the child of so innocent a lady and of a husband so well fitted to sustain her in motherhood would in due time be a good sovereign. The infant drew the young mother down to the grave; and this was the most bitter disappointment ever felt by the watchers round a child-bed. The sensibility of the people, stimulated and thrown into shape by the written words of imaginative thinkers, found in this domestic bereavement a sublime calamity; and the righteousness that was outraged by the Princess Charlotte's parents relieved itself by more emphatic worship of her un-

sullied wifehood. Thus was created a type or ideal of a Princess. Henceforth it was easier for a king's heiress to grow into the stately gentleness, which when half-imagined and half-contemplated makes a royal lady something near to a goddess. It was actually easier to educate girls, because girlhood had been cherished and mourned by all good households with one consent. In the next generation the cenotaph of Charlotte was a shrine reverently visited by men to whom she was almost a legendary and certainly a poetical creature. The useful but somewhat vulgar House of Brunswick was in this one child glorified and hallowed.

XI.

THE nation which tasted pure grief when the Regent's daughter died went into a coarse passion when the Regent himself, having become King, asked his Lords of Parliament to release him by an Act of divorce from his unruly wife. In sorrow it had been of one mind ; in the quarrel between husband and wife it broke into two parties. The strife was substantially political, and brought out the principles of the Whigs and the Tories. For the Tories in conformity with their old tenets maintained that the King must have his own way, and must either by secret arrangement, or, in default thereof, by public process of law,

be rid of a plague and scandal that must impair his dignity ; to compass this end they made him a litigant, and exposed him to the taunts of privileged advocates. The Whigs, accustomed to value the monarchy as an institution existing for the good not of the monarch, but of the people, thought it better that George IV. should be punished for his errors by being embarrassed with a hostile wife, and took pleasure in refusing him that entire freedom which nothing but an Act of Parliament could give him.¹

But had the Whigs been taken into council by the Tory Ministers, they would have concurred in endeavouring to make such a bargain with the Princess Caroline as would have kept her out of the island. Nor would she have rejected the offer of a pension contingent on her exile, had she not been guided by advisers who wished to use her plea as a lever for unsettling the authority of George and his courtiers. For George, apart from his quarrel with the Whigs, had for some forty years offended the middle-class families. He was not exemplary in conduct ; and the virtuousness which had eased itself in hatred of Jacobins was in all families save Tory families rebellious against the self-indulgent leader of British gentlemen. So the bustling citizens of London, backed by many clever newspapers and by many men

¹ It was not then, as it has been since, established by evidence, that he had without the King's consent married a Roman Catholic lady ; that his public marriage with his cousin Caroline was a bigamous, therefore a void, transaction. Of course the ministers thought the secret marriage a sham, and the Catholic lady only a concubine ; in her time George was a Whig ; both parties were entangled in his intrigues ; an Heir Apparent to the Crown is as troublesome as a King to the men who rule England.

of business capable of taking part in public affairs, went vehemently into a short-lived party of 'Queen's friends' against the King's friends.

This was a far more serious political movement than had been felt in England since the Hanover kings had begun to reign. There was in it a confluence of irritations. Some men thought they hated vice, when they were raging with ephemeral heat against the most eminent voluptuary in London. Some men took up an attitude as champions of wronged womanhood, whilst they were inveighing against the master who would not employ them. Brilliant speakers and writers fell upon the provoking stupidity of their official superiors. Traders, who knew that they and their friends had been for forty years supplying the wealth that lords and clerks had to expend on what was called 'The King's service,' began to show that they meant to be consulted in national transactions. Religious and censorious people of both sexes perceived with pain that the sovereign's advisers were protecting him from the consequences of sin, and that they were, after all, mere men of the world, not true Christians.

A long investigation conducted before the House of Lords was, like any great criminal trial, a daily topic. It could not, like a riot or an abortive plot, fall in a few weeks out of household talk. It was the one great supply of excitement for all the reading people of the land, for all who overheard their table-talk, for all that met in coaches, or at market, or at covert-side. It was observed that no one in the first

years of George IV. was afraid to speak out against the monarchical authorities : it was now safe to censure royalty, and those who defended it too obstinately weakened the foundations of privilege. The Liverpool Cabinet acted in the divorce business with customary prudence and with a fair amount of conscientious regard for the public good. Failing to keep up a satisfactory majority in the House of Lords, the Minister discreetly let the proposal drop ; and when the unhappy lady died from overstrain of passion, it might seem that the Princess Caroline in trying to be Queen had done no more harm than any mob orator or frustrated conspirator. Yet it now appears that the nation was made altogether more bold by this loud controversy, and was henceforth sure to be less docile in the hands of official managers. If the Court was to be supreme in society, it was clear that it must come nearer the standard of virtue. If the public offices were to conduct the nation's business, it would soon be necessary to make them more accessible to able men of no connections. The cause of reform was furthered by the Caroline agitation.

XII.

It has been customary to treat the death of Lord Castlereagh as an event marking an epoch in politics, on the ground that he was, and that his successor in the Foreign Office was not, a stiff supporter of the continental despots, and an implacable foe of liberals. No doubt he went far with the legitimate kings in bridling all who fretted against privileges, but he was in relation to them and to their advisers a moderate liberal. He was beyond other statesmen hated by English reformers and lampooned by the fashionable poet, Lord Byron. An unguarded student might fall into the mistake of believing that he was a reactionist, a bigot, even a blockhead. Taken as the hardest of the hard men that repressed change and disorder in England, he appears nevertheless to have been a good-natured, passionless, enlightened gentleman, when contrasted with the Anti-Jacobins of the Continent.¹

He did not profess any kind of doctrine that had to be propagated ; he treated with evasive but polite reserve the proposal of the Russian monarch, backed by his confederates, that England should join in preaching the Gospel politically. Again, when the allied kings deliberated how to stifle the reformers of Naples, he taught them that ‘every State has an indis-

¹ Lord Castlereagh was Marquis of Londonderry at the end of his life.

putable right to interfere [with the citizens of another State] so as to defend itself; but such interference is just only when there is real manifest danger resulting from the circumstances of a particular case; such danger cannot *à priori* be the object of an alliance of cabinets.’¹ This is not the language that would have come from his contemporaries, M. de Maistre, M. Gentz, or M. de Chateaubriand. It is the language of a business-like man who is not a student of rhetoric nor a dabbler in philosophy: it expresses the view habitually taken by modern British statesmen, who avoid aphorisms, and insist on waiting till a case is made out. Lord Castlereagh held that, as a State checks the growth of opinions held with passion and threatening a breach of the peace, so may several states combine for the specific purpose of disarming those who are clearly intrusive and ravenous, such as Napoleon; but he did not countenance a general warrant issued against any one that might be proscribed by the absolutists. More particularly he would have said, on the one hand, that, if the King of Naples could not keep the peace in his own dominions, and if the anarchy of Naples was clearly disturbing the neighbouring districts of Italy, the Austrians, being by European law lords paramount of Italy, might fairly step in with a high hand; on the other hand, that it was no concern of the Russians, or of Great Britain, so long as

¹ It was on this ground that his successor Mr. Canning politely excused France when invading Spain in 1823: conversely he forbade Russia to help France, for Spain was too distant from Russia to be dangerous.

their citizens were not wronged within the disturbed territories. In this distinction he faithfully followed Mr. Pitt, who did not shrink from contemplating for four years the sickening anarchy of France, and went to war only when the new French rulers broke a treaty and endangered England.

At Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818 the Allies had wound up their partnership. It was not expedient to shape the alliance into a federation of States, or, in other words, to hold an 'European Diet' for controlling the actions of the lesser States. In such councils there was obviously the danger of pedantic and sentimental intrusiveness. Had the Emperor of Russia been under the influence of M. de Maistre, as he was under the influence of Madame Krudener, he might easily have been induced to lay before the European Diet some very impertinent suggestion as to the discontents in Ireland. A real English politician such as Lord Castlereagh demurs to an argument from analogy if it is advanced with a view to action. He will say in the manner of a tough and wary attorney: 'We admit that we once seized Spanish treasure ships without a declaration of war; we knew that the treasure would be spent in arming against us; it is also true that we bombarded Copenhagen and carried off the Danish fleet when Denmark was not at war with us: we did so because we knew that our enemies meant to use that fleet; but we are not going to lay down any rule about seizures made without proclamation of war; we wait till an occasion arises,

and we look for precedents only when we need guidance.’¹

This way of limiting, which has been sometimes called minimising, is characteristic of the school of statesmanship founded by Mr. Pitt on the fixed habits of Englishmen and supported by the failure of some maxims enunciated by the Frenchmen of 1789. It looks like a narrow hidebound statecraft, and we may sometimes welcome a politician who strains it till it yields; but it has kept England out of much mischief; and Lord Castlereagh should be credited with a nimble escape from *à priori* wisdom.

A keenly critical examination of Lord Castlereagh’s despatches might no doubt make him out to be too indulgent towards absolute power. His admirers would say in his defence that it was his duty to keep on good terms with the restorers of the European system. Perhaps one would do well to avoid either opinion by pronouncing him to have been an honest champion of authority.

But for diplomatic correspondence England would have taken hardly any notice of the ferment of

¹ Lord Castlereagh connived at the interference of English adventurers, said to have been soldiers set free from the army when reduced in 1815, with the civil wars of the Spanish provinces in America. He was not the man to elaborate a formula for covering this laxity. With the ministers of Spain he could safely take some freedom. It was not pressingly needful to justify the migrations of armed men to America, however closely they resembled expeditions. It was a relief to London to be rid of discontented able-bodied idlers. Disorder in America was not at all embarrassing, provided it did not affect British colonies, or embroil the Court of St. James’ with the President of the United States. In maintaining neutrality, England has been more adroit than consistent.

political passion in the despised kingdom of the Two Sicilies, otherwise called Naples.

In those regions discontent might be smouldering or breaking out into flame without interesting even a traveller. It was the discontent of a few intelligent men, and it took unavoidably for many years the shape of conspiracy. It troubled the repose of courts, and diplomatists were obliged to side with courts. In such cases the Foreign Office of St. James' was bound to be in communication with M. Metternich and M. Nesselrode, the permanent leaders of Austria and Russia. M. Metternich was the leader of all the absolutists in Europe, the deadly enemy of the Carbonari.¹ He would have been much more free to crush what was called the spirit of innovation had he not been obliged to consider the feelings of England; and to him the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh were England. Had they gone all lengths with him, who knows but what he might have silenced the Italians? They were never silenced; for Tuscany, though almost Austrian in government, was a land of refuge and of free printing for all who struggled against the restored tyrannies. It is quite certain

¹ In 1799 the Bourbon king, having recovered power when the French were driven out of Italy by the Austrians, began to persecute the Jacobins of the short-lived Parthenopean Republic: some of these were freemasons: when driven to the forests of the Abruzzi they are believed to have disguised themselves as *charcoal-burners*. In the course of twenty years the name Carbonari was borne by a society, or confederate societies, ranging all over Italy. Each 'good cousin' or neophyte swore to give every instant of his life to liberty, equality, and hatred of tyrants; on default he was to be crucified, 'like our good cousin, Christ.' Arrayed against them were the Sanfedists, bound by oath to shed the last drop of blood of every 'Liberal' and his children of both sexes.

that no British statesman, not even Lord Eldon or Lord Ellenborough, would have encouraged the extinction of Florentine liberty. Whatever might have been the tendencies of Tory bigotry, Great Britain was fortunately governed even in the years of un-mixed Toryism by men of the world, too cool-headed and good-humoured to relish any unnecessary harshness. They might be officially compelled to make a show of siding with bullies and inquisitors ; but being themselves fearless, they could not at heart agree with those who throve on terror. Although clever men were kept down more than in former, much more than in subsequent periods, they could always get a hearing at least in a thin House of Parliament. Such men as Sir James Mackintosh and Mr. Brougham were far cleverer than the Tory Ministers, and had an unconfessed but perceptible influence on them ; the more because some newspapers and a few lively towns were sure to back them. It would be harsh to say that Lord Castlereagh was afraid of them ; but his correspondence with the Duke of Wellington shows that he felt a reasonable apprehension when there was a risk of being assailed by popular speakers and writers.

It was what is called a strong Government, strong not in intellect but in authority. But it would have been much stronger if the assembly which reviewed its policy had consisted generally of five or six hundred members chosen by the educated inhabitants of towns as well as by the owners of mansions,

instead of mustering for a division only just enough votes to discourage a critical questioner, and these the votes of placemen and patronage-mongers. The Foreign Office, which steadily did its work in diluting the acerbities of Europe, would have acted with more force, had it been from time to time cheered and heartened by a really popular vote. Lord Liverpool could depute a colleague to speak in the name of his King, being allowed by the narrow aristocracy of Parliament to do pretty much what he liked, and being well served by courageous and hard-headed officials. His successor was to speak the language of the most enlightened gentleman in tones not familiar but not alarming, to the aristocracy and the officials. Neither of them could be sure that he was uttering the voice of the country ; since the country had not yet developed its organs of speech.

XIII.

THE chief reason why the people of England took no interest in the early struggles of Italian liberals was, that nothing was heard of but conspiracy. Any kind of insurrection was more attractive to them than conspiracy, and they forgot that the English Revolution of 1688 had been brought about by secret plotting which issued in armaments. The few must conspire before they can gather a sufficient force to display in

the face of their oppressors. Their persisting in such plots ought not to debar them from liberal sympathy, for it must almost always be taken to prove that their grievances are real and permanent. But the European readers of newspapers, who form what is called public opinion, are greedy for novelty ; they are even grateful to the restless people who supply them with topics, and they enjoy a loud and rapid eruption of political fires even if the briefness implies a lack of solid material.

A superficial revolution was brought about in Spain at the time of the Neapolitan disturbances. Italy was set in motion by civilians, Spain by soldiers. In Italy there was, in Spain there was not, a root of native and hereditary faith, a durable certainty about the rights of citizens, a municipal coherence stronger than provincial inertness. Italian insurgents could argue from records and appeal to ancestors ; Spanish insurgents were for the most part imitators of contemporary neighbours.

The Spaniards were too far from M. Metternich to be under that contrivance of police which suffocated Italy. The King of Spain not only accepted, as Italian princes accepted, plans of administration which went by the name of constitution, but by reason of his remoteness was allowed for some little time to reign under conditions which an orthodox prince dwelling beneath the shelter of Austria would have endured only for a few weeks. The movement by which the Spanish Constitution was set on foot was apparently national ; and it was not at all ferocious.

It was not the work of the common people even of the towns, much less of the villages ; and Spain had for centuries contained no educated aristocracy to build a constitution upon. The Duke of Wellington, who knew Spain and had one Spanish friend, was sure that liberal politics must soon burn out.¹ It does not appear that he took the trouble to explain this to the French Conservatives ; it was not his business nor his amusement to teach politics. When he represented the Court of St. James' at the Congress of Verona, he just did his duty to his two masters, Lord Castlereagh and his successor, by reading out his instructions. King George was expected to speak as a privileged friend to the King of Spain, and to bid him shake off the yoke of the Constitution. The Envoy plainly stated that the Cabinet of St. James' had no notion of letting their King say anything at all to the King of Spain about his constitution.² Some men would have delighted in lecturing the foreigners, and explaining to them that they need not be alarmed by anything done at Madrid. The Englishman was not even aware that the Powers were very anxious.

¹ It is to be remarked that there have been for a very long time only two Spanish gentlemen, Alava and Arguelles, who have been intimate with English gentlemen. What prevents such intimacies is, to speak quite plainly, stupidity. This stupidity of Spanish gentlemen is ultimately traced to the Inquisition, and the dread of heretical pollution.

² The British envoy at Madrid, selected as a 'poco-curante,' to damp the hopes of all the Spanish parties, was engaged in exacting money to compensate Britons for mischief done them in the American seas by Spanish belligerents. The Allies begged that this mission should be delayed till the Congress of Verona settled the Spanish form of Government. Lord Castlereagh replied, that he was not aware, when he sent Sir William A'Court to Madrid, that the Spanish Constitution was going to be discussed at Verona ; very likely he really was not aware.

He left them, after delivering his message, under the impression that France was not going to interfere with Spain ; a foolish business he thought it, and yet not so absurd as to draw from him a remonstrance. Since the days of Walpole and Chesterfield the fretful foreigners had never been so slighted by England ; the Duke's indifference was the more withering, because he was not an Epicurean, only a Londoner.¹

France, which had to execute the decree of the Four Powers, was guided by new men who had not leant in danger on the Duke of Wellington.² It had not been thought worth while for English statesmen to retain that hold on French statesmen which they had just after the battle of Waterloo. On the other hand, it was quite natural that France should delight in acting independently and showing that her army was as efficient as in the days of Napoleon. To march into Spain without the approval of England was the more gratifying because it was but ten years since Spain had been, under English pressure, released from French rule. Nor did the comfortable Britons grudge their neighbours this gratification. A Bourbon prince went with a respectable force as far as Cadiz, where just enough blood was shed to signify that some Spaniards were in earnest, and that the discipline of the French troops was unimpaired. It was

¹ Yet when the French acted, he seems to have privately applauded their action.

² As a specimen of the fastidious Bourbonists who disliked liberal politics may be taken M. de Marcellus, at one time Ambassador in London, of whom it was believed that he took the Holy Communion every week, but in the form of a wafer stamped with his own blason.

a ceremony rather than a struggle. It was a counter-revolution without terror or revenge.

But it was an important affair. For it gave Mr. Canning, the successor of Lord Castlereagh, an opportunity for extricating his Cabinet from an alliance with Austria and her partners, which was rather too close an alliance to be compatible with parliamentary government.

The new Foreign Secretary was a man of real originality, and he set his mark on Europe. He was a good deal misunderstood. His somewhat juvenile eagerness to show his abilities was taken for political licentiousness. He enjoyed writing despatches, as an author enjoys making books. His despatches were not only spirited and lucid, but instructive and magnanimous. He was a professor of rational generosity in high politics. He did not break the consecutiveness of English diplomacy either by repudiating Lord Castlereagh's maxims, or by laying down new maxims which would have to be repudiated by his own successor. Yet he entered on a curve of departure from that policy which M. Metternich fondly believed to be the fixed idea of the British aristocracy. He perceived and he explained, that England in resisting an armed intruder had incidentally resisted also the spirit of innovation, but was not bound to act against innovation when it did not coincide with aggression. Now there were desires indulged in Europe and America which were dangerous, if at all, only to certain courts and certain privileged classes. Mr. Canning had no sweeping prejudice against reformers. In

his own country he ruled for some, against other changes. In other lands he favoured liberty so far at least as to do all that he could without embroiling England in a serious war, to protect from foreign meddlers all those who were winning a new autonomy, or a new isonomy.¹ Suppose an insurrection lasted long enough to demand some notice, Mr. Canning would not stint his pen in noticing it, nor be content to express a polite hope that the sovereign would find out how to allay the discontent; nor would he show any impatience at its continuance on the ground that the ferment might spread and cause a war. He would say: 'Perhaps the insurgents are right; as a foreigner I cannot quickly judge as to the goodness of their cause; if they attain a considerable amount of success, it is probable that they are in the right. I am far from thinking that they must be right merely because they are innovating; revolution is a malady, and I deplore it, but if another State hurries in to choke it, I shall do my best to secure it a fair field; in particular I will go against a bigot who interferes with the combatants in another land on pretext of religion.' These few words are offered as a summary of Mr. Canning's views as they are exhibited in his dealings with Spain, with Greece, with South America, and with Portugal.

¹ Autonomy is a nation's or a tribe's emancipation from an artificial sovereignty, as for instance the deliverance of Servia from the Porte. Isonomy is the establishment of a territorial law within the boundaries of a state, to which law all persons are subject, without regard to privilege of birth or office; such legal equality was established in Norway about this time. There is a third ingredient of political liberty, which ought to be known under the name of isegory; it need not be defined yet.

XIV.

MR. CANNING was a rhetorician, and he was tempted to adorn a transaction with a phrase. Accordingly his fame is for ever entangled with the somewhat dazzling paradox contained in his statement, that he 'called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old world.' What he meant was, that after clenching the Castlereagh profession of unwillingness to coerce the liberals of Spain, he went a step farther than Lord Castlereagh in encouraging those Spaniards who were starting republics in South America. A national attorney would have refrained from saying anything very striking about these republics, would have been content to explain, if asked, that it was necessary in the interest of British commerce to recognise the fresh and unstable governments of countries like Chili and Peru. The new world was a set of rough communities breaking away from the mother country, combining in leagues, likely to dissolve into petty fragments, and likely to join again under the force of irrational impulse, as ice floes splinter and cohere at the bidding of incalculable winds.¹ Most of these erratic provinces had been indebted to British adventurers for success in combating the regular troops of Spain, and Lord Liverpool was

¹ This image was applied to the political remodellings of the time by Mr. Wordsworth in his mostly prosaic but occasionally elegant poem, *The Excursion*, published in the year 1814.

not so scrupulous as might have been expected about conniving at the irregularity, and if he had passed a stringent Act to stop what was called foreign enlistment it could hardly have repressed the exuberant audacity of his fellow-countrymen. As an outlet for the spare pugnacity of Britons and Irishmen, South America was valued, even before it became the field of speculative miners and exporters. Men thrown out of employment by the peace, and younger men who had been bred to the quest of prize-money, could nowhere risk their somewhat cheap lives more honourably than on the *terra firma* or the lower shelves of the Andes.

Fighting under Bolivar was better than the piracies of Drake and Clifford, or the slave-trade of the last generation. Many of the adventurers must have believed that they were helping the cause of freedom. They would seem to M. Metternich as wicked as the Carbonari, but they were far off. The King of Spain was fair game anywhere except in Spain. Austria had no colonies to take contagion. Provided the Bourbons were inviolate in Europe, the legitimists did not care how many vulgar people took titles out in the wilderness.¹ So there was no great stretch of courage needed for setting an official seal on the results of South American revolutions. Mr. Canning, in opening

¹ M. de Chateaubriand, the second Envoy of France at Verona, had a notion of setting up three or four new Bourbon monarchies in South America: it was he who said, 'I have made romances, I shall now make history.' Instructed by his London Envoy, M. de Marcellus, he judged Mr. Canning to be a dangerous man: he was himself in the phraseological trade; he was not at all dreaded by his English rival.

pigeon-holes for the archives of consuls or of fourth-rate ministers, residing at Buenos Ayres or Valparaiso, did nothing that would not have been done sooner or later by any Foreign Secretary; only he so timed the operation as to indicate at a rather critical hour the persistent activity of Great Britain after seceding from the Quintuple Alliance. It may even be conjectured that a German or a Russian Chancellor would have done the same, had German or Russian trade struck root in South America.¹

What balance was there to redress in the old world? France, by waging an easy war against the poor Spanish liberals, might be taken to have healed a wound and smoothed a ruffled plume; but she certainly did not, by the Duc d'Angoulême's going to Cadiz and returning, make herself formidable. Had Mr. Canning been intimate with a French speaker or writer, he must have learnt that the 'reaction' or counter-revolution was sure to fail, soon after it lost the guiding and tempering spirit of Louis XVIII.; for there was a weight of virtue and knowledge on the side of the moderate liberals that was sure to

¹ The term Minister is applied not only to an official at home who is also in Parliament, but to an envoy residing in a foreign capital. Of these Ministers there is, or was, more than one grade. A Minister's temporary deputy is called a *Chargé d'affaires*. When there is no Minister or *Chargé d'affaires*, a Consul can do some of the work; but generally a Consul is a magistrate for keeping his own fellow countrymen in order at a foreign port, rather than a negotiator with a foreign government. Consuls, like ministers, are under the Foreign Office, but their reports sometimes pass through the Chanceries of embassies. An Ambassador is a minister of the highest rank, who, unlike other ministers, has a right to a personal interview with the Sovereign of the country in which he resides.

detach the French ministry, even if not reformed, from the arbitrary and close system dominant in Eastern Europe.

Balance of power in Europe was not at all disturbed or imperilled by anything that happened in the last fifteen years of Mr. Canning's life ; and there was then, as there is now, no State system including American with European communities. If there had been any cause for looking Westward for compensation when political liberty was put under the ban of the four Powers leagued at Verona, a well-informed man would have gazed, not on the floundering of the rebels against Spain, but on the measured tramp of peaceful emigrants from the Atlantic to the Missourian states of the great North American Commonwealth. A nation sure to counterbalance more than one Austria was growing more stoutly than M. Metternich's police or M. de Maistre's hierarchy. The incorporation of a new State in the Washington Confederacy, brought about automatically by increase of numbers, was a far more considerable fact than anything that could be accomplished by General Bolivar ; because the United States of the British stock were rationally bent on conquering nature ; the founders of Spanish Republics, deprived by priests of their reason, and indulged in superficial passions, were unfit to deal with their own mountains, rivers, and woodlands.

XV.

MR. CANNING was asked why he interfered in the affairs of Greece, not having interfered in the affairs of the Spanish Liberals and Absolutists. He answered :—‘ The Greeks did, the Spanish did not, ask for our support.’ This answer was truthful, but not complete. A wise man gives off-hand in debate what is enough to silence an adversary ; he reserves what would require delicacy and precision ; or it may be that in debate he strikes out a new spark more dazzling even to himself than the embers of meditation.

Supposing it to be known that the Liverpool government, whether Lord Castlereagh, or the Duke of Wellington, or Mr. Canning, spoke for it, consistently threw cold water on the holy alliance when it tried to propagate the counter-revolution in Spain, the student of politics will do well to learn that the motives of English action in regard to Greece were of a higher temperature than Lord Liverpool’s mind could register. Mr. Canning was, like Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, what the English call a scholar, and foreigners a humanist. Such men think in forms of thought first shaped by ancient Greeks and Romans, then filled again and again with the emotional reflections of modern Europeans. Of such scholars there was always a fair sprinkling amongst the soldiers and the diplomatists, a great stock in both Houses of Par-

liament ; so much so that one who spoke of Greece as a second mother-country, who deplored the sack of a Greek town as a desecration, who foretold that the intellect of Athens would revive, or pleaded for the rescuing of Attic marbles, was sure to be at once understood, and was likely to be applauded by a majority. Not Whigs only, the hereditary champions of the right of resistance, but ' Church and State men ' imbued with literature ; not only Lord Byron and his myriads of readers, but Colonel Leycester Stanhope, the disciple of Mr. Bentham ; not only the Quakers, who secretly gathered alms for the fugitives, but men of business who lent 800,000*l.* to the rebel chieftains, took part with the Philhellenes of the continent in helping this insurrection.¹ Mr. Canning was the only Tory minister that swam with this current of free thought ; fortunately he was strong enough to lead his colleagues.²

The insurgents blockaded Turkish ports ; their right to blockade was recognised by England. The little people that fought for ten years against the Sultan was a maritime people. Its cruisers found the sea to be a rich harvest-field ; they broke into piracy, and had to be checked by the British ships of war which guarded the Levant trade ; but they were

¹ Lord Erskine, who had been Chancellor in the last Whig Cabinet, published a letter to Lord Liverpool, in which he protested eloquently against letting the Greeks pine in slavery just to keep up Turkey as a weight in the European scales.

Only 348,000*l.* came into the Greek chest.

² The Ministerial newspaper, the *Courier*, wrote down the Greeks ; but the *Quarterly Review*, the organ of Toryism, went with Mr. Canning, its chief founder.

checked gently, and in their marauding they were shrewd enough to pick out Austrian traders. To allow belligerents to stop trade by blockading, and to indulge them with some irregularities besides, is far short of a recognition of autonomy. When asked to assume the protectorate of Greece, King George was made to decline it ; but the mere request showed that Mr. Canning's England was looked to as ' the nursing mother of free nations.' The proposal would hardly have been made if Mr. Canning had not been the leading Englishman. He cannot, however, be credited with any great effort made for the deliverance of Greece. Dismal experience had shown him how vexatious it was to have to bear with the frailties of Southern Europeans in their insurrections ; how hard to find out what sort of character lay beneath the eagerness of foreigners asking for patronage ; how great was the risk of arming popular leaders that could not bridle their tumultuary forces ; how easily patriotism fell into vindictiveness, and freedom engendered corruption. The English agents in the Spanish Peninsula had, in Mr. Canning's earlier term of office, failed to manipulate the gentlemen of Spain ; and now who could reckon on guiding the outlaws, the adventurers, the armed monks of Greece ?

There was but one method that could be adopted compatibly with British dignity : the coercion of the tyrant against whom Greece rebelled. To tell the Sultan that he must withdraw his soldiers from territories fairly won by his ancestors was too violent a breach of legitimacy. It was on the whole convenient

that the Ottoman State should exist, not that it should be a perfect State ; there was no harm in maiming a creature of such low organisation ; let Greece in due time break off like a claw from a crustacean animal. Such was the doctrine held, not without a show of reason, in the Foreign Office. It was no doubt safer to let insurrections go on for many years than to thrust an armed hand into the entanglements. Guided by the lights then shining, England did her duty to humanity by not allowing M. Metternich to trample out the slow fires lighted within the realm of the Sultan by heroic robbers and fanned by the lettered enthusiasts of Europe.

XVI.

MR. CANNING made parliamentary government odious to the kings of Europe and their servants. They could not understand how he was allowed by his superiors to say such eccentric things as he said to the Commons, and they called him a demagogue ; if not, how came he to be popular ? Now these were men who had themselves never tasted the joy of debate, never even seen the gregarious excitement of councillors, never heard an authoritative act set forth in choice words, announced, explained, defended by an orator. Oratory they supposed to be invective, and little more ; discussion they believed to be a form of delay. They

set themselves to pity the island statesmen who had to frame despatches so as to satisfy their opponents at home, who had to persuade the uninitiated that a tax must be imposed or a force equipped. How could a king act vigorously if he must needs send a message to the people's representatives whenever he moved a piece in the diplomatic chess-board ?

The truth is, that since the King's servants have been responsible to Parliament and also introduced to the King by Parliament, they have generally been able to act with more promptitude than their predecessors, who were only courtiers. No English, or British, or United Kingdom Parliament has ever clogged the action of the Secretary charged with Foreign Affairs as Queen Elizabeth clogged the action of Cecil and Walsingham. Parliament is a liberal mistress, partly because her agents are her favourite children, partly because a fair sample of a nation is more generous than any but the very noblest of monarchs. The Parliament of the United Kingdom, even before it became a satisfactory substitute for a general assembly of citizens, was a very handy instrument for a courageous minister to wield, if not in domestic legislation, at least in transacting the nation's concerns with other nations.

He who purposes to take part in the conduct of this nation's business must learn and remember that an English Government is generally bound to rule by persuasion or to get a thing done after showing that it is reasonable to do it, but is able also on occasion to do a thing without asking leave, provided

only that it be quick to explain the reasons for the step taken.

That promptitude, based on secrecy, should mark the action of a highly authoritative minister, such as Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh, was no more than one would expect. From Mr. Canning, who had to poise himself between two parties, such dazzling vigour could hardly be looked for. But he was endowed with the imaginative faculty which is a sort of divining; and he could foresee what would break upon his parliament with welcome brilliancy. In November 1826 the nation's council had been summoned to help the Government out of a difficulty touching a humble article of food which had suddenly become so scarce as to throw the corn law machinery out of gear. The patriotic country gentlemen who had intermitted their field sports to come to town and cheapen oatmeal, were rewarded by a stroke of state which was at once business-like and theatrical. It was the prudent First Lord of the Treasury that summoned them to unstitch their favourite piece of work, the corn law; but in composing the King's speech it was the Foreign Secretary who was answerable for such words as gave the hearers a pleasant sensation.

It was announced that Portugal was in danger and crying for help. England was bound by treaty to succour Portugal. The original covenant was made when King Charles II. married Catherine of Portugal, taking as her dowry the maritime town of Bombay, which was to become under English rule

the heart of Southern Asia.¹ Confirmed by subsequent treaties, it was carried out in practice a hundred years after Catherine's marriage, when General Burgoyne marched up the Tagus Valley to confront a Spanish invasion. England nevertheless refrained from forcing Portugal into an offensive alliance, when herself struggling with the combined powers of France and Spain. Portugal enjoyed till the days of Napoleon a comfortable neutrality, and also a sure warrant of independence. Alone among the States of Europe she had an unbought friend. And this friend was her best customer ; for 'the Port,' which takes for shipment the produce of the Douro valley, sold to the English that wine which was thought, down to recent times, characteristic of good Protestants and loyal subjects, which gave a coarse earnestness to the evening talk of Mr. Pitt's and Mr. Canning's admirers, and probably helped to shorten the lives of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Canning. Once only in the hundred and sixty-five years had England used the Tagus as a substitute for Calais or Dunkirk, that is as a doorway into the continent. In one war only had the Portuguese helped the Britons to invade France. The six years between Sir Arther Wellesley's landing at the Mondego River and his triumphant march to the banks of the Garonne saw Lisbon occupied, shielded, and enriched by Englishmen ; Portuguese regiments brigaded with British regiments ; their most valuable

¹ Sir James Mackintosh dated the alliance from the reign of Edward III. : but in the fourteenth century international fidelity was only in the gristle, if so much ; coherent states conscious of fixed obligations hardly existed in the middle ages.

province out of Europe, Madeira, garrisoned by British troops, and faithfully evacuated when the danger of French violence past away ; all the remnants in Africa and India of what had been in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a showy set of conquests left scrupulously to their own flickering dignity. No Englishman had ever proposed to take advantage of the subordinate State's low vitality. The royal family, called sonorously the House of Braganza, was enabled by English sailors to migrate from Lisbon to Rio Janeiro, the capital of a huge wilderness called pompously an empire.

Some Britons would have liked the Brazilians to join in stopping the slave-trade, but there was no dictation. It was expected that the emigrant princes would find enough to satiate their ambition and their orthodoxy in South America. Unluckily one of them was bent on extricating his mother country from liberal, that is to say, modern institutions. These, he thought, might be abolished in Portugal, as they had been, four years since, in Spain. The partisans of this intruder, Don Miguel, mustered in Spanish towns, and issued thence to stir up a counter-revolution. The Spanish Government was believed to encourage them. It might be feared that France, which had so recently trodden down the Spanish Constitution, would help Spain to make Portugal il-liberal.¹ So there was just enough danger to give a

¹ The Spanish term in those days seems to have been 'Apostolic,' which corresponds with the 'Sanfedist' of Italy, and the 'Holy Alliance' of the Czar.

relish to the championship which England had under treaty a right to assume. Eleven years had passed since transports were hired to take British soldiers to a continental harbour. If Napoleon's veterans crossed the Pyrenees, it followed that the Duke of Wellington's old comrades might cross the Bay of Biscay. If France moved brigades, England might move battalions ; and battalions sent by sea made a show beyond their numbers. The owners of continental armies might smile at the fuss made in London about six thousand fighting men ; it was an incurable foible of the Britons to overrate the importance of their expeditions.

Nevertheless this expedition was sufficient. France did not take affront ; professed, indeed, to think that Portugal might be indulged in liberties that were not wholesome for Spain. No other nation could have moved even so small a force as six thousand men in so short a time. No other little army would have been received by foreigners so gladly, and entertained for eighteen months so agreeably, as the English by the Portuguese. So Lisbon was held for a year and a half, and the alien garrison was all the better for the trip.

It became a fixed idea with Londoners that if they sent five or six thousand men to make a demonstration anywhere in the South of Europe, ' not a shot would be fired.' Mr. Canning then gratified his country and dazzled his ill-wishers by a movement which must have reminded him of the Athenians going to help the Thebans at the bidding of Demosthenes, though

the adversary that he had to threaten was too dull and half-hearted to compare with Philip of Macedon.

This intervention in the affairs of the Spanish Peninsula, however legitimate as the fulfilment of an obligation, was a decisive proof of England's sympathy with the friends of progress. Parliament was, by the flash of energy, beguiled into complicity with the friends of European freedom, and the last deed of Lord Liverpool's cautious and restrictive government was a far stronger protest than had been uttered either at Vienna or at Verona against the Metternich policy of cramping the nations.

XVII.

AFTER fifteen years of anxious yet dignified presidency, Lord Liverpool fell sick, and ceased to transact business; he was too ill for six weeks to ask for relief from his post. In a country not provided with efficient public offices, it would be hardly possible to wait six weeks for a chief. In England the legislative work of Parliament is arrested, the administration is not seriously disturbed, by the absence of a Prime Minister.¹

¹ Lord Liverpool was not an old man: of his successors at least six have had many more years of life than he; being a Peer, he had escaped the frequent night sitting of the Commons; but he had come next to a Minister that was murdered; he had himself been marked for murder, and though an orderly and successful man, he had suffered from the

The titular head of the State, King George, could sign papers brought him by other ministers ; the Chancellor could use the Great Seal ; each of the three Principal Secretaries could use the seal of his office ; commissions could be granted, felons hanged or reprieved, places of honour and emolument awarded to claimants, although there was no First Lord of the Treasury capable of writing his name. The sovereign enjoyed a brief spell of liberty, and the ladies who graced his marine villa or his artificial lake had a little more power than usual. To the Court the grave minister had been more of a check than to some of his politicians. But the Court could not break loose from the established necessity of submitting to some statesman. After fifteen years the time had come for choosing out of an extremely small set of qualified persons a new chief of the State.

Now, in the absence of any successor designated by Lord Liverpool, it was open for George either to choose the Tory who had been next in worth, or to invite to his councils the recognised leader of the Whigs. On the death of Mr. Perceval, George, then Regent, had offered power to Earl Grey, the first of Mr. Fox's Whig disciples, and to Lord Grenville, a disciple of Mr. Pitt, then in sympathy with Earl Grey and other Whigs ; they had refused to serve him on the conditions which he laid down. Since then Lord Grenville had ceased to act with the Whigs, and his

daily pressure of 'correspondence.' No doubt the cares of a Prime Minister were greater when the King was unwise and Parliament idle, than in the later generation.

friends had given a liberal tincture to the Tory Ministry. Earl Grey had taken no pains to recruit for his party amongst young men rising to distinction. Himself too proud to waive a principle of justice in deference to such a man as King George, he was the austere and formidable chief of the most high-minded and persevering politicians, of men content to grow old without promotion, and to see inferior men acting in the name of England, rather than be courtiers and time-servers. To these men the King, bound by an oath to uphold what they thought obsolete, was one of those plagues which wise men put up with just because they are inevitable. They must wait till in the course of nature the Crown fell to some one of the descendants of George III. that had not inherited enough strength of will to give much trouble. George IV., though scrupulous about the Catholics, had by no means a strong will, and was accustomed to lean on the tough resoluteness of his Chancellor, Lord Eldon, the only male person for whom he seems to have had any affection. In choosing his First Lord of the Treasury he so far obeyed Lord Eldon as to take a politician who was pretty sure to hold in abeyance the public question on which he was avowedly at issue with the King. He chose Mr. Canning; and it may be fairly assumed that he got over his dislike to Mr. Canning mainly because he saw in him an agreeable flexibility.¹

¹ Some of the most amusing of anecdotes are given by Ministers who have had private interviews with George IV. and other similar monarchs.

As it was almost impossible for Earl Grey to take the place, the friends of liberty had, on the whole, reason to rejoice that the Tory preferred was a Tory of such adroitness as to give the public policy a decided turn on an easy curve, effecting a real deliverance without shocking a creed. Mr. Canning delivered England from the Chancellorship of Lord Eldon ; therefore everyone who was for altering private law and improving the judicature was thenceforth relieved from a despotic and inert sophist. Mr. Canning emancipated Scotland from the hereditary agency of Lord Melville. He had, indeed, turned over the patronage of Scotland to one who was ready to do what the Melvilles had done ; but this was a mistake arising from ignorance. In these days an English Minister might go through his career without knowing Scotland better than he knew France.¹ But the House of Commons contained two

Unfortunately there are, by the supposition, no witnesses to confirm the narratives. Lord Eldon is the authority for the received account of his master's affectionate caresses and whimperings.

¹ Lord Melville was, like his father, a Cabinet Minister, but not officially Minister for Scottish affairs: incidentally he was the Prime Minister's deputy for managing the privileged classes in Scotland. A lawyer, holding a seat in the House of Commons, and called the Lord Advocate, was the official person accessible to members of the House; not being in the Cabinet nor in charge of an organised department, he had far more trouble than power. Lord Binning, who, Mr. Canning said, was to 'have Scotland,' was to be not a Minister at all, only a secret agent. In England after 1780 it would have been impossible to keep the Crown patronage in the hands of anyone screened from parliamentary censure. The one original Secretary of State was in the eighteenth century the Northern, and is in this century the Home Secretary ; if he cannot manage the control of Scottish affairs he can ask for aid, permanent or occasional ; if he delegates it to a distinct office, Scotland becomes a sort of province and the union is impaired.

or three Scottish members who, though not representatives of the people, for the people could not be truly said to elect Members of Parliament, were good specimens of the spirited and keen thinkers trained in the comparatively rational jurisprudence and the moderate philosophy of Edinburgh. The House of Commons was even then a region in which a Minister could make discoveries ; and the new Minister fell in with good advisers, who convinced him readily that Scotland ought not to be treated as a province, nor managed by an agent, like a Crown estate.¹

Mr. Canning, in his brief tenure of the Treasury, showed no eagerness to do things which his predecessor had put off or forbidden. He was a liberal, but not a reforming ruler. It was felt that he had a genuine sympathy with intellectual people, and this feeling was wholesome for young aspirants. As Mr. Pitt was the master of courageous and authoritative office men, so was Mr. Canning the master of the politicians who aimed at objects that lay just outside the range of the permanent office men. Growing minds were inspired by his fine thinking, as in the foregoing generation young men in Calcutta had been quickened to enterprise by the Marquess Wellesley. Philosophy and science, jointly represented by the new term, 'useful knowledge,' lay apart from his perceptions ; their best votaries were almost unknown to him ; their loudest preacher, Mr. Brougham, was his acrimonious rival. Religious philanthropy, in the

¹ Mr. Peel, when Home Secretary in the Tory Government, appointed Whigs as Scottish judges.

person of Mr. Wilberforce, spoke to him, and was courteously encouraged ; but he would not offend Liverpool, or frighten Jamaica, to gratify the friends of the negro race. The fashionable world he divided into his friends and his foes ; the foes were the stronger party. Although he entered into the high gentry by a connection with the noble Bentincks, he must be ranked with another kind of aristocracy : plebeians, not being lawyers, raised by the direct results of industry, and purged by academical education.¹ No one trained on mere literature was ever more reasonable ; few men that have made a profession of debate have been more veracious ; very few of the statesmen bred in the close atmosphere of cautious antipathy have been so serviceable to freemen and enthusiasts. He was despised by some Whigs ; of these there were some who were, in character if not in style, his superiors. If they could do without him when living, they were after his death constrained to enter into his bequest of political efficiency.

Just before Mr. Canning's death, his new policy had embodied itself in a treaty signed by the representatives of Great Britain, France, and Russia, for the encouragement of the Greeks against Turkey. By employing the Duke of Wellington to talk over the new Czar Nicholas, Mr. Canning obtained what he had failed to obtain of the Czar Alexander through Mr. Stratford Canning, a protocol, or signed record of

¹ To the *indirect* results of industry are to be referred the wealth, leisure, and refinement of the higher gentry : in the long run they too are indebted to the people who go to market : rent is an essence distilled from all sorts of vulgar labour.

oral agreement, on which in the course of a year was founded a treaty. It appears that more plainness and more despatch would have won him this agreement some years sooner. He had been taking too much pains to soften prejudice and to conciliate Austria. Foreign diplomatists thought he was trying to overreach them. Although he piqued himself on declining the protectorate offered by the Greeks, he had shocked the precisians by speaking kindly to the Greek delegates.

To countenance insurrection was plainly contrary to the fixed principles of M. Metternich. The new liberality of England had won over the Czar, and had broken the union of the three Eastern Powers. The solvent for the combination of absolute kings was found in the Philhellenic idea. Frenchmen felt with Englishmen that the Greeks had by seven years of wild fighting earned at least that mediation which they asked for. The Turks had not consented to any mediation ; it was by no means an arbitration or umpireship, but a forcible peacemaking. Austria favoured Turkey, but not loudly nor effectively. The Czar had more than one motive for interference ; he wished not so much to rescue Greece as to maim Turkey. The French were hampered by their unwillingness to coerce the Pasha of Egypt, who was aiding the Sultan with thirty thousand soldiers in the Morea, and doubling the Turkish fleet ; the trade of Marseilles would have been injured by the blockade of Alexandria ; and a blockade was not an operation of war to which the French navy was inclined.

Nevertheless the French diplomatist M. Guilleminot, went full lengths with the English Minister in Turkey, Mr. Stratford Canning ; and these clear-headed men, being at a considerable distance from their Courts, enjoyed intervals of silence in which they could use their discretion unembarrassed by letters. They lost no time in acting on the agreement signed in July 1827. Without waiting for the Russians they encouraged, in September, the English Admiral, Sir Edward Codrington, one of the Trafalgar captains, to patrol the seas which surround the Morea, and to drive the Turks and Egyptians to a harbour in which they could not hurt the Greeks. The Admiral did not wait for the French, much less for the Russians. He did not wait even for his own squadron to assemble. He carried his flag in the 'Asia,' a very good specimen of the two-decker ship, such as had served under Nelson, carrying, in the English fashion, a somewhat insufficient crew, but admired as the best ship belonging to any nation in the Mediterranean. With three smaller vessels he formed a line across the entrance to the Bay of Patras ; and as a dog drives sheep, so did he turn back the united Turks and Egyptians, who had ten times as many guns as his four ships carried. He was limiting or minimising a war. He was shielding from the Sultan's people a certain adventurer engaged in disturbing, or at least attempting to disturb, the peace of one of the Sultan's provinces ; this adventurer was no other than Lord Cochrane, the cleverest sailor of the great French war after Nelson ; a man of more dazzling fame than Sir

Edward Codrington, but not, like him, serving happily under his country's flag.¹

A month later, the British squadron, made up to three two-decked ships and four small frigates, but quite inadequate to the task imposed on it, kept watch over against the bay of Navarin, where the Ottomans had sixty fighting ships, some fire-ships, and many transports.² It was mid-autumn, a dangerous season for moving troops by sea; but, if let alone, the Egyptians would have sailed round to attack Hydra, the heroic little island which furnished the new Greek nation with a hopeful indomitable navy. The Egyptian ships were guided by skilled French officers, and their commander inferred that Admiral De Rigny, who led the little French squadron, would not fight against his fellow countrymen. Fighting was certainly regarded as inevitable by both the Christian

¹ The Duke of Clarence, Lord High Admiral by Mr. Canning's nomination, boasted privately of having sent to Admiral Codrington two out of his three ships of the line against the intentions and without the knowledge of the Prime Minister; if this is true, it appears that Mr. Canning thought his spirited intervention could be carried out by one big ship. The Duke of Clarence was in his support of Codrington opposed by his professional advisers at the Admiralty.

Lord Cochrane had been of the greatest use to the people of Chili in their rebellion against Spain, but he was not prosperous nor useful in the subsequent struggle of Greece against Turkey. He was one of those men of genius who are too egotistical to be always efficient.

² The word frigate was employed to mean either a ship of about a thousand tons carrying about ten guns, each of which threw a 24-pound round shot, on each side of a roofed battery, and about six lighter guns or guns of less range on each side of the uncovered deck, or to a ship of twice the size and twice as many guns, or to anything between these two extremes. The battle of Navarin is the only one in which double-banked frigates are mentioned; they seem to have been much the same as the famous 'Leander' and 'Centurion' of the great war, perhaps bigger. The French commander was in one of these; it had sixty guns.

admirals ; M. De Rigny sent word to the Frenchmen to stand aloof ; and he was obeyed. But fighting was contingent on the firing of a Turkish gun ; just one shot was all that was wanted to turn the enforced armistice into a contest.

The two squadrons could not enforce the armistice unless they kept close to the Sultan's fleet. They could not stand off and on, outside the bay, in the coming winter.¹ They must needs anchor ; and the Bay of Navarin was the only roadstead near enough. The Frenchman, who advised the Turks, drew them up in a horseshoe formation, Turks and Egyptians intermixed yet in two lines, so that their lighter craft looked straight through the gaps left by the stronger ships ; four ships sent by the ruler of Tunis kept out of the way. Sir Edward Codrington had been in and out of the bay in his own ship, and his messengers had reconnoitred for him ; without ' clearing for action ' or forming a line of battle, he led his own and the French ships to their assigned places, and anchored very near the Turks. When closely questioned by Lord Dudley, the Foreign Secretary, who suspected that he provoked a rupture, he stated that it was the rule in the British navy to anchor so near the enemy as to see the colour of his eyes. No doubt he meant to hit hard if he hit at all ; but he had to keep up as long as possible a semblance of peacefulness ; to this he sacrificed his cabin furniture.²

¹ This was what Lord Dudley, the Foreign Secretary, intended them to do. Admiral Codrington ought to have explained to him that it was absurd.

² He was not so near as to be injured when his nearest adversaries

Very soon after the English and the French anchored, before the Russian, who were a little stronger than the other two nations, could come to their places, the expected shot was fired at an English boat, which was going on a message to ask that a Turkish fire-ship should get a little further off. This shot killed an Englishman, and his death was at once avenged by English and French artillery.

The 'Asia' disabled an adversary as big as herself by her first discharge of forty guns, and soon afterwards despatched three other ships of the first line, which had not been ready to fire together at the beginning of the combat; the admiral said that the 'Asia's' gunnery was the best he had ever seen, and he had been in great battles. By hauling on her cables the ship changed front twice in the course of the four hours' action.¹ Seventy-five, that is about one-seventh of his crew, were hit. The hull was struck by 125 cannon-balls, but nowhere quite penetrated; the mainmast received twenty-five cannon-balls without falling. It is therefore manifest that the enemies' ammunition and guns were rather weak. The 'Asia' was for a long time aided by her

burnt and blew up. Admiral Gore, who was sent by the Cabinet to question him as to the causes of the battle, and when orally cross-examined on his return, alleged as a reason for anchoring so close that the water was too deep further off.

¹ In this and other similar battles fought by ships at anchor we read of 'springs on the cables,' that is, hawsers or ropes fastened to the cables, slackened or tightened at will by men in the ship, in order to change the direction of fire. Sir Edward Codrington stated that the Turks had springs on their cables, as if ready for action; he stated also that during the action he sprung his broadside twice; probably he put springs on his cables after his neighbours opened fire.

tender, or messenger vessel, the 'Hind' of 150 tons and thirty men, commanded by Lieutenant Robb, who, hearing the battle, sailed in without orders, joined his chief, kept at bay some of the small craft in the second line, and took twenty-three round shot without sinking. This also implies that the Turkish guns could not strike hard enough.

The 'Talbot,' a small frigate, was after a very hard fight partially sheltered by a Russian ship ; and when these good comrades met afterwards the Britons cheered in recognition of the timely succour. A French vessel was saved by Englishmen from a fire-ship. M. Hugon, captain of the 'Armide,' was specially admired by the English who were near him, and their praise was communicated to the French admiral. The Russian chief, Count de Heiden, when complimented by the Commander-in-Chief, wrote a hearty and clumsy note to say that he had spent the happiest day of his life in doing his duty as a sailor under the eyes of English seamen, the most generous of allies ; his regard for Admiral Codrington became stronger, and was expressed more racily, even after Russia had become a belligerent and had detached her squadron from her Western friends.

The fight lasted four hours : the Turks were so arrayed that they must have hurt one another whenever they fired wide of the Christians ; the slaughter in their fleet would have shocked Europe, had they not been Mussulmans and the helpmates of cruel armies.¹ One of them was picked up, when his

¹ The Sultan's Minister reckoned that eight thousand at least of the

ship exploded ; he told the English who rescued him, that it had been quite a mistake to begin the fight so early ; had it been put off till midnight, as was meant, the fire-ships would have been ready and the Christians would have been burnt.¹ As it was, no Christian ship was destroyed ; yet the three biggest English ships were sent home for repairs. Of the Ottoman ships thirty-seven were destroyed by their crews. Sixteen out of sixty survived in a state capable of repair. The allies remained peaceably in the bay for six days, mending their masts, and explaining their eccentric conduct both to the Egyptian commander and to their own employers. Soon after this a considerable number of Egyptian ships went home laden with enslaved Greeks as their booty. The English admiral had received no orders, and in the absence of orders, did not think it prudent to stop and search these vessels.² The battle, it seems, was but the interlude of a perplexed drama, in which England and France acted as peacemakers.

Sultan's subjects were slain. It is said that the wounded were left to die by their friends.

¹ The fire-ships were so placed at the horns of the crescent that the allies were obliged to anchor to leeward of them ; therefore if the wind did not change at night the burning vessels would have drifted on to them ; but there might have been a land breeze at night ; besides this, the same wind that took the fire to the allies would have taken it also to the Turks.

² Even the Ambassador, Mr. Stratford Canning, was left without instructions for some time after the fight at Navarin. He was plainly reproached by the Turkish Minister of Marine with breaking the law of nations, and was in imminent danger of imprisonment.

The English admiral went into winter-quarters at Malta, waiting for a fresh flag-ship ; the Czar offered him a Russian ship to hoist his flag in ; but the Czar was going to war ; to England the Turk was still an 'ancient ally.'

Their fear of Russian encroachment had barred them from a straightforward maintenance of the Greek cause ; their agents in the Levant, civilians and warriors, seem to have felt no twinges of conscience in destroying a great many ships and seamen without any declaration of war. If war had been declared, the English Government would have promptly paid 'head money' to the squadron ; as it was, this remuneration was delayed seven years, till Codrington became a member of the reformed Parliament and spoke for his shipmates to the House of Commons.

The battle of Navarin was vehemently applauded both by the friends of the Greeks, because it put an end to the Egyptian invasion of Greece, and sickened if it did not cripple the Turks, and by the plain patriots of England, because it proved that after many years of peace the reduced navy could inflict a terrible blow. To the student of international politics it is interesting because it was the only naval action since the famous battle of Lepanto in which three equal States worked in harmony against a common adversary. But if it was satisfactory that France and Russia should give the leadership to England, it must nevertheless be felt that it would have been more satisfactory had the purpose been more clearly exhibited, had the forces mustered been so strong as mercifully to overawe the Mussulmans, had the leading State exercised a more decisive authority on its servants, had there been less ambiguity in the conduct of the gallant and skilful commander of the allied squadrons.

XVIII.

IF Mr. Canning really set the Court of St. James' in a posture so new as to alarm the votaries of high authority, at all events there was an early opportunity given to it for resuming its ancient propriety. For when Parliament met in 1828 it was addressed in the King's name by a Tory minister, the Duke of Wellington, who with Mr. Peel, the ablest of the Tories, had stood aloof, in lofty distrust, from Mr. Canning's Ministry. One expects then to find the Liverpool and Castlereagh policy restored, and the King forgiven by his brother kings. But this did not come to pass.

The Duke had, when out of the Cabinet, served on a mission to St. Petersburg for arranging the pacification of Greece ; by thus serving his king he incidentally helped the very minister whom he distrusted ; by negotiating in behalf of the insurgents he so far aided the Russian as to be thereafter qualified for checking him if he pressed too hard on the sovereign of the insurgents. This looks like the ingenuity of a trimmer ; it probably was nothing but plain directness and the unconscious enjoyment of moderation.

During his lifetime the Duke allowed it to be believed, and it is not easy now to shake the belief, that he was, like powerful statesmen of the Tudor and of the Stuart dynasty, a doggedly faithful servant of the monarch, subordinating all interests to the main-

tenance of the Sovereignty. Yet it was known before he died, that he did not in his loyalty revere his master's eldest brother ; for he elbowed him out of the Admiralty as coolly as he kept Mr. Huskisson out of the Colonial Office ; knowing that George must soon make room for William, he did not, like Mr. Canning, propitiate William by letting him manage the navy. His papers, published many years after his death, show that he resented, without letting it be known to the newspapers, the meddlesome and malign activity of a far more unsatisfactory Royal Duke, the Duke of Cumberland ; it would have made him popular at a time when he needed a little popularity, had it been known that he stood out against the intrigues of this man. Now there have been many Tories, who would in like manner have ceased to be courtiers in dealing with a King's brother ; it is safe to aver, that hardly any Tory, that has had the advantage of coming into power since Mr. Pitt made the Court a mere appendage to the Cabinet, would have truckled to a Clarence or a Cumberland. But the Duke of Wellington had a harder task than any other Tory Minister.

At a time of broken and feeble administration, in which Parliament seemed to have slipped out of Treasury management ; when ' fashion ' was extremely powerful, and the fountain of honour was choked with weeds ; when great lords and still greater ladies had to be offended ; when almost all the clever men were either scheming with Mr. Brougham, or moping over the tomb of Mr. Canning ; when there were great dangers

known to the Secretaries of State, but none so publicly known as to make people cry for a dictator, the Duke, without flattery, and without threatening to resign, sternly guided that self-indulgent King, who, after much epicurean acquiescence, was found after all to have a conscience, a scruple, a passion of remorseful fear, and a perception of his own opportunities.¹ Mr. Pitt had waived his own convictions in deference to George III. ; and Mr. Pitt was the indisputable leader of the nation. George IV. stood on his father's footsteps and would have died before yielding to any of the rival leaders of Parliament ; he gave way to the majestic prudence of the soldier who was not thought even by himself fit to be the minister. This is the great triumph of the old Tory principles, the Duke's success in saving a real monarchy for the heirs of him who, had he fallen under the scourge of the Whigs, would have been openly humbled. The principle of grave respect for the Crown is held no doubt by Whigs, and enables them to bear with much personal weakness. But no Whig has respectfully controlled a sovereign whom he entirely despised. George IV. was despised by the last of the old Tory ministers ; through more than two years of sour senility he reigned harmlessly, and died in some show of honour, because the good Tory bore with him, veiled his infirmity, and fortified him against poisonous intrigues.²

¹ English ministers in modern times have a trick of offering to resign and a nervous apprehension about being thought to cling to office. Even Earl Grey lowered his rare dignity by a foible for resigning. Modern histories of England take too much notice of resignations inchoate, complete, or retracted.

² How undignified and perplexed a king can be has been betrayed to

XIX.

THE triple alliance, which was formed to rescue from devastation the Morea and a few other districts, passed without any breach of amity into three diverse courses. The English minister sanctioned, and even aided, the encampment of French troops in Greece. It was apparently easier for France, being the patron of Egypt, to keep Egyptians out of Greece without violence than it would have been for any other nation, and the French army by this time required another expedition. A few of the Greeks, not yet distributed amongst purchasers, were rescued from Egypt; it was thought too late to undo the whole of the evil done by the Egyptian slave-ships; though Mr. Peel in the English Cabinet pleaded for the redemption of the captives.

Nicholas of Russia, besides having a quiet and profitable quarrel with Persia, was allowed to fight the Turks in Armenia without being suspiciously watched by Englishmen; on the European side of the waters which divided Turkey he waged, with somewhat more spirit than usual, one of those plausible crusades against the Sultan which English policy

mankind by Lord Eldon's garrulous record of his interviews with George IV. in 1829. Those who disapprove of sovereignty inherited and granted for life can find a solid argument in the evidence given by such monarchists as Lord Eldon and the Duke of Wellington. A really devout Tory should be silent, even in posthumous memoirs, about the inside of his idol.

had sometimes favoured, sometimes stopped by mediation.

The Duke of Wellington, employing first a Foreign Secretary bequeathed by Mr. Canning, then one of his own following, and not betraying any great anxiety in the Eastern courts, looked on without dismay at calamities which seemed, but were not, sufficient to break the Ottoman dominion and thereby to dislocate the State system.¹ He could not without the help of Austria hope, even if he wished, to keep back the Russians from the lower valley of the Danube ; and he was not the man to contrive a new partnership with M. Metternich after the severance effected at Verona. That the Czar's army should reach the waters which flow into the Egean Sea was a novelty ; and if Austria and France took fright the Duke would have felt it to be his duty to cheer them up, and with their concurrence to secure the balance of power ; and all men in Europe who thought at all about such things would have agreed in saying, that so daring and strong a monarch as Nicholas was not to be trusted with the gates of the Euxine and the Egean. A liberal politician would have competed with the Czar in patronising nascent States, perhaps in the name of Christianity, whenever there was a fair chance of defending them from the tyranny against

¹ An English Prime Minister fit for his place is the master of the Foreign Office at all times, and of the War Office when there are serious hostilities ; being First Lord of the Treasury, he generally trusts the Treasury to the Chancellor of the Exchequer ; if he is a peer he has leisure for diplomacy and armaments, being to a great extent relieved of finance.

which they struggled. If Russia was the champion of the Danubian principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia, England might, according to the ideas of Mr. Canning's disciples, deliver Servia from bondage.¹ But England under an ordinary minister did not make such a long arm. The Duke of Wellington, not being at all a transcendental politician, neither fretted at his being unable to mould Turkey into a sort of Portugal, nor schemed to get new clients for his country amongst the vassals of the Porte. But he found Greece under wardship; and he behaved to her like an honest but stingy guardian. Greece was in danger of becoming the prey of adventurers, since her own heroes were not so wise as to choose from amongst themselves a civic chief. Of all the adventurers the most cunning and successful was a man called Capodistria, who, if he belonged to any nation, was a Russian.² It was desirable to prevent the new commonwealth from being governed by an agent of the Czar. A foreigner there must be to rule the Greeks, because the rivalry of native leaders could not be hushed except by a foreigner. It must always be very hard for the ruler of one nation to ascertain who is the most trustworthy amongst the conspicuous men of another nation; the Duke, with his Spanish experience, could not be

¹ In 1812, when Mr. Stratford Canning persuaded the Turks to make peace with Russia, the righteous claims of Servia were set aside. This is fairly excused because there was no time to lose; Napoleon was going to invade Russia; it was expedient to bring to the Polish frontier the Russian forces then on the Turkish frontier.

² With Pozzo de Borgo a Russian diplomatist, and Ipsilante a Danubian Greek, he had kindled the Greek rebellion.

sanguine about the capacity of any insurgent captain, nor do the historians of modern Greece indicate any one amongst the many actors in the long struggle that had paramount qualifications. If so, it behoved the patron to find some high-minded gentleman to sacrifice himself to Greece as his adoptive country; to dazzle and overawe the citizens, this gentleman must be princely, and his new country must become a kingdom. Now there was a princely gentleman disengaged and ready for service, Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, who eleven years ago had been welcomed in England as the husband of the future Queen Charlotte. Like many privileged men who are so born that they cannot enter any profession on the footing of citizens, Prince Leopold had to be idle for the best years of his life. He was waiting for some nation to employ him. This idleness did not spoil his sound mind. Almost all men respected him; only his lost wife's father disliked him. He was chosen by the Duke of Wellington and his friends to be recommended to the Greeks. George IV. was abetting those who in Germany opposed this plan. The Duke therefore wrote to his Foreign Secretary to this effect: 'either you or I must go to the King and tell him that he is breaking the law by communicating directly with a foreign King, and plotting against his own Ministers.' No Whig could have been more peremptory. Unfortunately Leopold found a good excuse for eventually declining the new throne.

In haggling with the Sultan for the terms of liberation, the Duke of Wellington obtained for the

Greeks a release from homage and tribute ; but on the other hand, he would not claim for them either the Island of Crete or the Northern Hellenic provinces. Leopold therefore said that the kingdom would not be big enough ; and he was right. There were to be not more than 700,000 inhabitants ; there ought to have been at least twice as many. It was not worth while to institute a court and a diplomatic service for a nation smaller than Denmark. A statesman endowed with imagination would have conceived the idea of making Greece so considerable as to match with such kingdoms as Sardinia or even Naples. A touch of modern generosity might have stirred the Englishman to give up the seven islands hitherto held in trust for the possible Hellenic State. A politician bent on watching the balance of power should have tried to make the first king of Greece too strong to need the patronage of Russia. A student of war, even if unacquainted with old history, could not help learning from the exploits of Miaulis, and Canaris, of the Hydrieotes and the men of Spezia and Psara, that the existing Greeks had fairly earned by naval prowess every island in which their language was spoken. The prudence which forfeited Leopold's services in restoring civilisation must be called niggardly ; after the lapse of fifty years it is deplored by all magnanimous Europeans. Leopold was dissuaded from the acceptance of the artificial throne by the man who had a personal reason for preferring a republic. Capodistria seemed to have a fair prospect of turning a provisional Government into a permanent one. The

Western Powers had greater things to attend to, and almost neglected Greece ; at all events, they left their work imperfect. Those who continued to take an interest in the heroic nation were not sorry when Capodistria was put out of the way by an avenger of wrong. Four years after the cessation of hostilities a German boy called Otho was housed in Athens as a king. Absurd as this arrangement was, it must be considered that Greece fared better than any South American province ; and it was a gain to the cause of peace that once more, long after the Congress of Vienna, the Great Powers, however disjointed and retarded by jealousies, made up their minds to constitute at least a nucleus for the accretion of freemen to an independent State.

XX.

It was thought in 1828 that the Duke of Wellington reversed the liberal policy of England in his treatment of Portugal. For he allowed Miguel to usurp its monarchy, and he did not allow the exiled supporters of the infant Queen to use England as their base of operations against the usurper. Yet the official view, held by Whigs who know what official responsibility amounts to, is plainly in his favour ; and his decision holds good as a precedent.

In the spring of 1828, Portugal was free from all

menace of Spanish interference ; therefore nearly the whole of the English garrison of Lisbon was, against the wish of the English Envoy, recalled. When this check was removed, the usurper broke loose and became a scandalous tyrant ; the indulgence of tyranny made him a sort of maniac. Not only Liberals, but the Tory Government of England, expressed disappointment and even horror. Nevertheless the King's Guards were not sent back to the Tagus ; for it was generally inexpedient, and therefore in this case it was wrong, to interfere in behalf of a nation or part of a nation against its rulers even if they had gained power irregularly, unless the intestine disorder grew into such lasting anarchy as made commerce impracticable.

During the Duke of Wellington's tenure of office Portugal suffered grievously ; yet he could not step in to choose a ruler for it. It looked easy enough to throw the English sword on to one scale of the balance ; and by sending another expedition, and by occupying Oporto and other places as well as Lisbon, to prop up a legal and peaceful regency ; and so to hold on till the little girl Maria grew to be a real sovereign.¹ If Miguel had been a Rajah in Hindostan, he would have been soon disarmed by

¹ Sir James Mackintosh said in the House of Commons that Oporto and Madeira contained British settlements and deserved protection. If Miguel had given a colourable excuse for hostilities, it would have been perhaps easy to take these places and put them under a protectorate. But Miguel did not systematically assail Britons residing in Portugal. Such wrongs as they sustained could be compensated, and compensation could be obtained by diplomatic forces brought to bear on the actual government of the capital.

English authorities. In Europe he had the same immunity from coercion as Mr. Pitt conceded to Danton and his accomplices in 1792. Continental monarchs might upset an existing government of a neighbouring people if they deemed it a criminal government. Irishmen might approve of such intervention. Britons who had never been in office might desire it for other nations. It is conceivable that some Britons actually in office might wish to be asked by a struggling people to come to the rescue. But regular English ministers, taking cognizance of their own vulnerable points in Ireland, in French Canada, and elsewhere, and sensitive about the undulating passions of the great Powers, were bound to put off, as long as they could, any forcible interference with the contending parties of an European nation; and they were pretty sure to interfere, if at all, only with the concurrence of France.¹

The Queen of Portugal, aged nine years, was by her attendants brought to England as to the surest place of refuge. The King of England paid her the compliments due to a monarch. Miguel was tolerated as a sort of Regent; his young niece was sheltered as a royal guest, not as a political refugee. England swarmed with rich Portuguese who had hurried away their goods out of Miguel's reach. They set to work

¹ These are questions of time; a long civil war may become so horrible as to justify interference.

It is not always easy to say that it is a nation that is in a state of war. Nationality, like other things, is graduated. The Greeks in 1827 were rightly thought to be a nation, not a body of insurgents; the European powers interfered between the Greek nation and the Turkish state, but not between the contending parties of Greeks.

to form out of refugees a little army. The Duke of Wellington would not let the soldiers drill in any considerable body at Plymouth ; he made out a list of little towns near Plymouth in which they were to reside by fifties or twenties, till their hired ships were ready to take them away. But they were strictly forbidden to sail to Portugal or any of its dependencies, for this would have been an expedition. It is not quite possible to stop the export of arms, the sale of ships fitted for war but not armed, or the migration of trained warriors, to the land which is the scene of war ; it is quite impossible to prevent the transmission of money borrowed in the neutral country. Neutrals have to be exceedingly vigilant in guarding against the wrong done to them by belligerents who wish to compromise them. There are irregularities which escape punishment. But it is not hard for a maritime power with ordinary vigilance to stop an expedition.¹

The Duke of Wellington in a season of peculiar anxiety had to correspond with the titled and plausible leader of those Portuguese who wished to overthrow the rule of Miguel.² This gentleman lied with great pertinacity for the good of his party, and would have slipped out of a less firm hand. At a time when his brain was racked by heavier cares, the English-

¹ An expedition may consist of a single ship.

² The Duque de Palmella, accredited to the Court of St. James' by the Government of Portugal before Miguel's usurpation. There was another envoy from Miguel in London, not accredited ; such an agent is received in the private house, not in the office, of an English Secretary of State.

man was to the Portuguese a cool, plain, hard man of business. In Captain Walpole of the war-ship 'Ranger' he had an agent as cool and resolute as he could wish. The enemies of Miguel were mustered at Plymouth, and shipped nominally for Brazil. They thought they had tricked the English minister when they reached their real destination, Terceira, the chief island of the Azores. There they found the 'Ranger' in their way. In Portuguese waters the British sailor defended by cannon-shot, not Miguel's usurpation, but the neutrality of King George. This consistent and thorough-going vindication of neutrality has not been imitated by France, by the United States of America, by the kingdom of North Italy. Nay, even England herself has seemed to overlook or slight it ; ingenuity seldom fails to traverse the analogy which a reasoner indicates, and it is of no avail to wield a precedent in the teeth of an excited Parliament.¹

¹ An expedition to the Azores in which Pedro, the rival of Miguel, took the lead, started from a French port in 1832. The English Colonel Hodge, who served in it and wrote its narrative, says, that he and his comrades received as much help from the French authorities as they afterwards received at Terceira : they had found it hard to smuggle themselves from England. The Foreign Secretary of 1832 had in 1828, when out of office, condemned the measures taken by the Duke of Wellington, but he was not, when himself in power, more indulgent. The Whig view is that the Duke was right ; but France was not rebuked for acting differently.

XXI.

IN dealing with Russia and Turkey the Duke of Wellington showed that he knew how to temporise and how to clip a bargain ; in maintaining the strict rule of neutrality against the Portuguese liberals, he displayed a dry obstinacy such as might be expected of an official who was not his own master. In legislation and the conduct of domestic affairs he was far less arbitrary than was expected, and he surprised the world by concessions. Because he was a soldier, it had been assumed that he would be imperious. When he was forsaken by the friends of the professional statesman, Mr. Huskisson, whom he discarded, he went a little out of his way to turn into statesmen two of his old fellow-soldiers, Sir George Murray, and Sir Henry Hardinge ; they would not have been thus employed by a Prime Minister that was not a soldier. But it turned out that they were as reasonable and politic as civilians. In these appointments, as in his own life, the Duke showed that men who are thoroughly efficient in camp can be, except perhaps in debate, entirely qualified for civil business. There was a third soldier, the Marquis of Anglesea, employed by the Duke to govern Ireland ; he was indiscreet, and his master sorrowfully dismissed him ; he had been a brave commander of cavalry, but he would not have been at any time trusted like Lord Hill or Lord Lynedoch with a whole wing of an

army, much less with a whole army. If soldiers were taken into the civil service it was not because they were to be thenceforth obedient like soldiers, without deliberating, but because they knew how to keep secrets, to overcome procrastination, and to maintain honour without over-subtlety.¹

In trade it is said that success depends on knowing when 'to make a loss.' In politics there have been some that knew when to make a concession. This is less easy in what is called a free country ; because a free country generally contains, besides parties of politicians, a mass of intelligent and spirited men and women who, although habitually inattentive to administration and unable to follow the processes of law-making, are occasionally roused to earnest anxiety by an innovation, and hasten to proclaim that the foundations of virtue are sinking. When the free country is democratic, any great change is brought about by the votes of a multitude, and by mere counting there is set up for the occasion that sovereign power which is called a majority. The nation which for three years obeyed a soldier was not democratic ; nor did the Duke, when he made an innovation, consult even those heads of families who in choosing members of the House of Commons acted as the people of Great Britain. The only majority of

¹ Amongst the Marquis of Anglesea's aberrations may be noted, for the warning of others, his asking Lord Palmerston, who had left the Ministry and joined the Opposition, what he thought were the intentions of the Duke, and his telling him that he had no instructions about the Catholics : to such a visitor he ought to have betrayed no shadow of doubt or uneasiness.

which he took cognizance before he innovated was the majority of the inhabitants of Ireland ; and for this body he did not, like a demagogue, profess high consideration.¹

English writers on politics have a trick of saying that this or that ministry is weak ; they are in too great a hurry to say this of a ministry when it either loses some showy member, or learns something new from its opponents. The Wellington Ministry was strong, stronger than Lord Liverpool's. Both made concessions ; both lost some support that seemed needful, and were opposed by superior intellects and characters. Lord Liverpool in the Queen's case gave way as a litigant gives way ; he was also afraid to press his own tenets so as to thrust back Mr. Canning. The Duke of Wellington was apprehensive of failure if he parted with Mr. Peel ; he persuaded him to rule, and to enact laws, and to approve of measures framed by opponents ; he held him fast as a friend whom he must keep, letting all others do as they like. He schooled him in the art of compromise ; he taught him how to originate instead of acquiescing. The con-

¹ Democracy is that form of state-holding in which a majority of citizens has for the time absolute power. He that is in the majority to-day may be in the minority to-morrow. The obligation to obey the majority is one of the settled habits of the European-American mind ; it rests on no transcendental sanctity : it is a matter of convention. The resort to the counting of votes is an expedient for maintaining the coherence of a people ; it is assumed that this coherence is supremely desirable. The fewer are content to obey the more voters, because they may another day cease to be on the weaker side. The result of the vote is a factitious unanimity, but there is nothing to bar the rescinding of the vote. It is a vulgar error to speak of the tyranny of the majority in a democratic state, as if the majority were a permanent body, not in flux.

cessions made by these two well-matched yoke-fellows were the acts of strong men. Making no attempt to win either by Court honours the possessors of parliamentary votes, or by Treasury patronage the managers of elective bodies, disarming the Whigs by voluntary economy, giving high office to one Whig only, Lord Rosslyn, treating the King as a sick man, arguing without threats in both Houses of Parliament and arguing nowhere else, not troubling themselves about newspapers or pamphlets or public meetings, they enforced the conclusions of a few enlightened patriots on a mass of less reasonable men, and they did not deign to calculate how long it would take to bring that mass into their way of thinking.

The concessions were twofold, but in both directions they infringed on what was by some called the Constitution, by others the Establishment.

The Constitution of the United Kingdom has never been set forth in a single authoritative document ; that branch of law which is called constitutional law is, like the private law, a compound of judgments or decisions with statutes. Of these statutes some concern the Establishment, that is to say, they regulate the sovereign and his delegates in the matter of religion ; and these are more artificial than are the laws which regulate the sovereign in taxing, or in judging, or in levying war. Religion is a habit of the human mind which seems to be older than the habit of obedience to a sovereign, and as in many countries, so particularly in Britain, it seems to have given rise

to a clergy with claims on the produce of the land and with some right to interfere with families, before the families agreed to maintain a coherent State under a single sovereign.¹ The religion of the island, as of other territories, has changed its symbols from time to time without abating its claims. Endowments with some jurisdiction have passed from a heathen to a Christian priesthood, from one kind of Christian priesthood to another. Meanwhile there has always been a sovereignty which has recognised the claims of religions: sometimes clipping them, sometimes readjusting them, now tightening, now relaxing, the conditions of tenure. The sovereignty was imperilled in England during the middle ages by the intrusiveness of a foreign power, the Roman Papacy; in Scotland for a few years of the seventeenth century by the native clergy. The sovereignty in England, when the second Tudor and his two first

¹ The 'social contract' has been derided on the ground that history does not record any such transaction. Probably the first monarchy bigger than a tribe was formed by a composition of forces of which the principal one was terror; for instance, the first chieftain of a tribe who tamed and trained elephants or camels or horses, may have overawed and incorporated other tribes. But one may conjecture that another cluster of tribes, seeing the advantage of coalescence, agreed under less terror or under an apprehension of danger tempered by emulation, to gather into a league out of which grew a state. The great bulk of mankind must have been born in a condition of subservience; yet on reaching the age of self-maintenance the males must have gone silently through a stage of recognition of authority; and their consent may be deemed correlative with an assurance of advantage, such advantage as a facility for migrating into an allied tribe. In the modern European world, so easy is it to change residence, that a grown-up man who remains in the land of his birth must be taken to consent to the maintenance of its government; so that there is a contract tacitly formed every day by individuals with the state.

heirs were reigning, regulated the clergy with such absolute and stringent discipline as offended most Christians.

Elizabeth, the last and the most reasonable of the Tudors, devised the cleverest of the many great English compromises or settlements. The Church under this adjustment became highly effective in forming the English character ; and when a fourth generation took it with its honourable wounds it was so comely and reverend that it was admired by French Christians, although they were themselves obedient to the Roman Papacy.¹ The right of the sovereign to give and take away clerical offices and revenues was called the Royal supremacy ; Henry VIII. had set it forth in an Act of Parliament. The method of worship and of doctrine was by Elizabeth, and again by Charles II., set forth in a book which was sanctioned in the two Acts of Uniformity. James II. tried so to use the supremacy as to destroy the uniformity ; he wished to give endowments and jurisdiction to clergymen who in obedience to the Pope rejected the conditions of tenure imposed by Elizabeth and Charles II.² James, therefore, was considered a traitor, and his

¹ The term Church in English constitutional law means the clergy, otherwise called the spirituality, or the clerical estate. The Sovereign, often called Head of the Church, is in law not part of the Church, but outside it.

² These politicians who when James was only heir presumptive tried to obtain parliamentary securities against his ever becoming the sovereign, were the founders of the Whig party. The essence of their Whiggery was the claim of a right to subordinate a prince's inheritance to the nation's welfare. Whigs are by their principles free to exclude from the sovereignty another Roman Catholic such as James, or, if the case be made out, any prince otherwise disqualified.

treason renewed the English nation's dislike of Popery. The politicians who availed themselves of this popular antipathy, when they founded on compact a new monarchy more closely hedged in by restrictions, thought themselves obliged to do as Elizabeth had done, to countermine popish malcontents and to force them into exile or obscurity by harsh laws fiercely executed. This suspicious watchfulness was made more sour by special resentment against the Irish. Furthermore, it was embittered by the wicked ambition of Louis XIV. of France, who, though not loyal to the Pope, vexed the Pope's adversaries, and played the sorry game of pushing exiles back into their estranged country.

In maintaining the new monarchy the politicians passed a law which must be reckoned as one of the statutes of the religious establishment. It was called the Act of Settlement. It settled the order of succession to the Crown. No one thenceforth was to reign who was not a Protestant. The word Protestant is foolishly called a negative term ; every term for which one can find an opposite term is negative in denying the opposite. Protestant is an historical term. By the time it was put into the English settlement it had become, like many historical words, noble. It was endeared by heroic efforts and saintly endurances. It served as a flag to rally round the establishment, that is, the State established in relations with the professors of religion, three distinct societies of Christians : the Presbyterians, the Independents, and the Baptists. Collectively these three bodies were called

Nonconformists, or Dissenters.¹ The historical reason for the separation of these Protestants from the Protestants of the Established Church is to be found in the retention, half indolently, half wilfully brought about, of Catholic or Popish forms of words in the Book of Common Prayer.² In 1662 the rulers of the restored Church refused to purge their formularies ; they deliberately retained a certain residue of old ceremonial abhorred by the Christians of the Reformation. What seemed in Elizabeth's time a safe indulgence of her predilections became in an age of stronger conviction a cause of earnest discord. Citizens who could not conscientiously share the Lord's Supper in a posture which implied adoration or sacrifice, were by statute, that is by a new deliberate command, forbidden to share in municipal government ; this was the most glaring of the disabilities imposed on Nonconformists.

There were then two sets of outworks strengthening the laws of supremacy, of uniformity, and of Protestant succession. But those who added the

¹ The Presbyterians, who asserted that Christians were divinely commanded to obey assemblies of ordained teachers called Presbyters, were for a short time apparently dominant in the English Parliament, and in union with the national Kirk of Scotland ; in the course of two hundred years they had shrunk to a few congregations estimated at about eleven thousand souls ; but in spite of this decrease they retained their rank as one of the three sects of Protestant Dissenters, and had accordingly the right of addressing the sovereign at Court by deputies. There is a sort of aristocracy amongst Dissenting sects, and the Wesleyans, though numerous, are new men ; whilst the Friends, or Quakers, though of ancient descent, are not orthodox enough to be called, in constitutional law, Protestants.

² The word Church is here used in the popular sense, to comprise laymen.

second set, that is to say the anti-catholic statutes subsequent to the fall of James II., were not interested in enforcing the first set, since the Dissenters, being Protestants, were needed as allies against the Jacobites.¹ Yet it was quite necessary, for the founders of the Protestant monarchy, and for their first heirs it was hardly less necessary, to leave untouched on the Statute Book the enactments which seemed to guard the Church. For as William and Mary could not have been crowned without the consent of Protestant Tories, so the artificial succession of the Hanoverian George required as much support as could by any means be obtained from the same source. The Protestant Tories were zealous for the Church, and the Whigs therefore were fain to humour them so far as they could humour them without wronging their own dissenting allies. Hereditary dissenters in the Hanoverian period bore for the common cause a light yoke of disability. As soon as security and indifference gained the mastery over plotting and enthusiasm, the British Parliament, with the national love of makeshift, passed not an Act for abolishing the disabilities, but a series of 'Acts of Indemnity' to save from penalties those who set at nought the disabling statutes. If the Dissenters had been left to themselves they would have continued to wear, as a fantastic ornament, what was forged as a shackle; but theory or philosophy forbade it. A penal law

¹ There were many Jacobites who were not Catholics; if their King James III. had reigned, they would have had some difficulty in obeying him.

which has become obsolete is like the remnant of a tooth, which on a slight chill may cause inflammation ; it is called a dormant statute ; mischief-makers awaken it. A penal law which requires the annual revival of a contrary law is not obsolete nor dormant. It is a scandal to a high statesman, because it lowers the dignity of the Legislature. A sophistical politician invents a plea for its defence. A plain ruler of men inquires whether it is really useless ; if useless, whether it is also offensive to any considerable number of those whom he rules.

In the first parliamentary session which he controlled, the Duke of Wellington acquiesced in the repeal of the laws which had formerly vexed the Protestants who were not Churchmen ; and this acquiescence was important as a recognition of Whig legislators, and still more as an implied rebuke of that Toryism which had hitherto hugged restriction with blind fondness. As this change was effected by reasoning without excitement, and was not due to the pressure of circumstances, it makes an epoch in the domestic history of England. Thenceforth the government of the country was more intellectual.

XXII.

THE 'happy establishment' of the Hanoverian Whigs had become in George III.'s reign, after the reconciling of the Jacobites, as deeply settled in the minds of all educated Englishmen as Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights ; yet it was feared that if Catholics held office or sat in Parliament they might take advantage of their power to undo the good work. For about fifty years this fear had burnt slowly with short flashes and some long coolings. No young men commencing an inquiry into the phenomena of politics could escape the Catholic question. During the fifteen years following the fall of Bonaparte all young men who on entering London life attracted the notice of Mr. Peel, were, he said, in favour of the Catholic claims. Young men are more hot for justice than men of senatorial years. The generosity of the age coloured the image of oppressed fidelity. Popes wronged by Napoleon, Papists beset in France by democratic tyrants, in Ireland by a vulgar oligarchy, won for themselves the romantic pity which used to be given to Huguenots and Waldensians. Little was known of the virtue of France, but French exiles had been discovered to be as gentle as Englishmen, and English prisoners of war had talked gratefully of wholesome tenderness shown them by French plebeians. Although one priest had led insurgents in the Irish civil war of 1798, the priests in Ireland had been

orderly, since the rebels were irreligious. Britain contained a small number of Catholic families who led inoffensive lives not without a shy dignity. If they were dull people, it was because they were forbidden to sharpen their wits in public schools and universities. Their exclusion from Parliament, whilst it saved their estates by keeping them out of costly electioneering, deprived them of the best education accessible to grown-up men, and of the patronage which might have brought their cadets into lucrative services; and it was churlish to deny them good chances of rising in the world whilst they were prompt taxpayers and effective in war.¹

Mr. Pitt had prepared for their relief by cutting away an old and plausible objection. There were historical reasons for thinking that they were taught to reserve their political obedience, to pretend loyalty towards their King, to be secretly loyal to the Pope alone, to make promises to heretics, and to turn secretly to the Pope for leave to break these promises. Mr. Pitt, imitating herein the strongest of English kings, consulted the universities of Catholic States, and ascertained that their doctors, like true modern gentlemen, scouted and abhorred such duplicity. On the warrant thus given by men versed in casuistry, Mr. Pitt concluded, and acted on the conclusion, that Irish Catholics were not altogether untrustworthy. To pacify Ireland he let them be magis-

¹ Mr. Canning once argued in the House of Commons in pretty language, that in the ceremonial of the coronation some Catholics, in the discharge of inherited duties, had behaved quite as well as other Peers; if fit to be courtiers, they must be fit for legislation.

trates and barristers. To retain Ireland as a province he kept them out of the Irish Parliament. But in due time he abolished the provincial Parliament, and he would have allowed Irish Catholics to sit in the new Parliament of the United Kingdom but for the King's steadfast refusal.

Here arises the question, why Mr. Pitt, charged with the great duty of upholding the Protestant settlement of State and Church, did not shrink from doing for the United Kingdom what he dared not do for Ireland? The answer is, that in the Irish Parliament the Catholics would have had an overwhelming majority; in the greater House of Commons they would have been at the worst not more than one to seven, in the greater House of Lords even weaker. The abstract principle was that a true Catholic was too much under the sway of spiritual persons to be a good legislator.¹ On this principle the men who had saved Ireland from the French would have struggled to preserve a parliament in which the bulk of the gentry and of the peasantry had no representatives. Without either denying or affirming this principle, the supreme politician would have run the risk of tincturing the British legislature with an infusion of Popery rather than go on bearing the burden of provincial disorder and keeping open a backdoor

¹ It is only by disregard of the unseen and eternal order of things that spiritual persons can take a real interest in this world's business; the inconsistency of celestial faith with patriotic anxiety is strongly felt by men of ascetic and contemplative life. The Roman Empire decayed partly because Christian teachers said that 'to one sure to die it did not matter under whose rule he lived.'

for French invasion. A true disciple of Mr. Pitt was bound to say, not that a Catholic gentleman, on the strength of his gentility, had a right to sit in a legislative body with other gentlemen, but that if he did sit there with Protestants all round him he could do no real mischief, and that if excluded he was not unlikely to be a mischievous conspirator, or at least to withdraw at a pinch from his local jurisdiction. Statesmen responsible for the King's peace had to guard against aliens ; Irish Catholics were by their disabilities turned into aliens. Priests were generally anti-political ; to counteract their influence there was nothing so effectual as the moral pressure of the London Parliament and of the ' good houses ' to which members of the legislative bodies had access.

Had there been no Ireland, it is probable that no politician except George III. and Lord Eldon would have fought hard against the admission of Catholics to Parliament. But the Duke of Wellington would not have proposed it ; perhaps he would have acquiesced in the proposal ; it would have been, like the relief of the Dissenters, a measure founded on a theory of right. The Duke had no particular reason at any time for noticing the existence of English or Scottish Catholics ; had they conspired he would have crushed them, had they been outraged by rioters he would have guarded and avenged them ; as it was they did not require treatment any more than the Freemasons or the Philhellenes. To the philosophical spirit of generality he deferred so far as to comprise them in the class of British subjects to be relieved of dis-

abilities ; for this grace they were indebted to their noisy brethren in Ireland.

The politicians were but a fraction of the British people, although there were times when great numbers of those who read newspapers became eager and vehement on questions generally neglected. The Catholic question had been debated year after year by the few, and touched listlessly as a topic of conversation by the many. The Whigs had foregone promotion for a quarter of a century rather than comply with a king's wishes about the Catholics ; but they had not formed any association to promulgate their arguments and strengthen their following. With most of them it was a point of honour, not an article of faith. Besides Whigs there were men of progress who had not inherited the belief in Catholic claims. The best educated of these, the Benthamites or 'philosophical radicals,' contemplated objects which by their magnitude threw Popery into insignificance. The clergy with very few exceptions, the great bulk of the gentry, most of the worshippers in churches and chapels, most of the contributors to charities, most of the professional men who seldom dared vote in elections, most of the freeholders who elected knights of the shire, most of the householders who elected burgesses, most of the townsmen whose towns had no burgesses, appear to have been timidly but stubbornly Anti-Catholic. But they were somewhat remiss, somewhat weary of the subject, trusting overmuch to the House of Lords and unable to sway the House of Commons. By petition, by county meetings, they

could have done something, if roused in time. Had Mr. Canning, or Mr. Brougham, or Earl Grey been in office, they would have been more suspicious ; the leadership of Mr. Peel tempted them to false security.

To confront and overrule so much virtue required unusual courage ; to disarm so much political force required that secrecy and sudden announcement of a decision which go to make up a 'stroke of state.' To do this honourably one must be quite pure of selfishness. The Duke of Wellington alone, of all Englishmen, was qualified for the enterprise. It was his character that made it possible. He could, and one or two others could, employ clever and flexible men, without adapting himself to their pliancy.¹ He could, and no one else could, employ with honour the authoritative intellect of him who has been well called the greatest member of Parliament, Mr. Peel. His own reason for infringing the Constitution was very simple ; he thought it a less evil than an Irish rebellion. But if he could have inoculated the virtuous classes with this reasonable apprehension, it would in them have turned to mere imprudent terror. It was for the good of the country that there should be a new way of thinking about Church and State. A single mind, representative of English minds, had to go through the process of conviction and to exhibit with ample show of details the digestion of causes. Mr. Peel supplied this most useful mind.

By listening to Mr. Peel his contemporaries were instructed rather than persuaded. He was to them

¹ Such as Lord Lyndhurst, Dr. Philpotts, and Sir James Scarlett.

as a guardian to his wards, or as a craftsman to apprentices. He was so cold and yet so sensitive, so haughty and so candid withal, such a corner-stone of party government yet so broadly patriotic, that he could be accepted as the sponsor for a governing class, not to be disowned by it when it judged for itself. He was a plebeian Tory with high refinement. In his youth he had missed the encyclopædic training of a Horner or a Hallam. But in three cases out of four he knew a thing just in time, after it was known to the philosophers, before it was known to the empirics ; and when he avowed his new lesson, sensible Britons had to stand in a row as his class-fellows. In later life he used to name Mr. Huskisson as his teacher ; from him he learnt the art of political economy. But not from him, nor from any clever man whose cleverness was dominant over character, did he learn the more sublime art of guiding freemen in questions of right and wrong.

It would be natural to lament that the honour of delivering the Catholics from unnecessary bonds was not held back till it could be enjoyed by one who like Earl Grey had endured for their sakes privations similar to theirs. The Whigs had devised restriction of Catholic franchises. If human affairs were transacted with method and propriety, it should have been left for a Whig minister to proclaim that the time had come for loosening. But the restrictions had become fibres of the Constitution. Of the Hanoverian Constitution the Whigs had been the conservative guardians. For nearly the whole of a long reign

they had defended it against George III. But under the imprudent guidance of Mr. Fox they had nearly lost their conservative habits, and forfeited the confidence of the more virtuous citizens. Between king and people they certainly had not such a footing as to be at any time before the year 1831 strong enough to carry through the House of Lords a bill for undoing the constructive work of their own ancestors. The Tories, on the other hand, had an accumulated authority which gave them enough momentum for infringing on popular tenets, and for delivering the King from his Protestant obligation. It seems to have been proper for the last true Tory Government to play Pope, and dispense from his coronation oath the gentleman who by the first of his two marriages had incurred forfeiture of the Crown, and had asked a Tory Parliament to release him from his second wife. When there is a knot in English politics Whigs fumble over it ; Tories cut it, or try to cut it.

If a Whig had framed the Act, he might have stated in the preamble that the tenets of the Catholics were not of such a complexion as to unfit them for legislative or ministerial positions. If a Benthamite or philosophical radical had been employed by Whigs to expound the Act, he would have formed a more general theorem ; he would have said that a man's theological tenets were not reasons for or against his being entrusted with any civic functions. Of these two views the former is one to which a politician, cognizant of what was then going on in

France or of subsequent experiments in the Netherlands, in Belgium and Prussia, might demur ; the second opinion would have been in 1829 seed dropped on a rock, and the omission from the parliamentary oath of the word 'Christian,' if accidentally brought about, would have done no good to candidates that were not Christians.

If a Catholic had not enough of the true citizen's spirit to make laws or conduct affairs, it did not follow that in a popular government he need be legally disqualified ; for on Whig or liberal principles the voters were to be trusted to reject him ; and it was safer to let him be rejected as a candidate by voters than by the House of Commons after election. Yet as long as the House contained members who bought their seats, and members nominated by patrons, there was no doubt a danger visible. There might be a score or two of members sitting for places in England, but not representatives of English neighbourhoods. They might be under the direction of spiritual fathers, and they might lie by, to bargain in the spiritual interest with a ministry of unstable equilibrium. This contingency was disposed of after one general election ; as the Reform Bill let loose the British people, and the people did not elect enough Catholics to form a considerable group. On the complexion of the Upper House no effect was produced by its being thrown open to Catholics ; yet one must not deride those who apprehended a change, for in other countries Pope's friends have been too zealous for the Pope to be good senators ; and in 1829 no one could foresee that the

British State would by gentleness disarm the Pope and assimilate his friends. The Tory statesmen had no occasion to affirm or to deny either of the two theoretical opinions about Catholics. They could not deny either without going out of their way to dispute with liberals whose support was indispensable ; nor could they assent to either without needlessly shocking that preponderant mass of narrow thinkers of which it was necessary for the time to change the centre of gravity. Their homely and modest argument faced all ways. It was constructed of materials which came to hand in their offices. They had means that others had not of ascertaining what was the amount of danger involved in denying legislative powers to the Catholics of Ireland.

In that diseased country there was a gentleman, fortuitously but aptly named Mr. Lawless, who provoked a civil war by parading a Catholic force in towns held by Protestants ; magistrates and police were not efficient for preventing this incendiary folly. Most of the Catholics were under legal advice ; their guide was a man too shrewd to slip into treason—Mr. Daniel O'Connell, barrister-at-law, and knight of the shire for County Clare. This political personage was expected, by those who elected him and by many hundreds of thousands of able-bodied ignorant men, to force himself into the House of Commons in spite of his Catholic faith. Of course the House of Commons would have required him to take the oath which every sitting member had taken, which no Catholic could take. Rejected by the House, he

would have been in a position similar to that of Mr. Wilkes, who sixty years earlier brought Parliament into conflict with the electors of Middlesex. But the electors of Middlesex, however strenuous in the assertion of their right, stood almost by themselves. The electors of County Clare, however barbarous, however despicable, were backed by about three-fourths of the Irish people, and their cries were echoed by the most hungry and irrational peasantry in Europe.¹

Thirty years ago there had been a silly, cowardly, and murderous rebellion, lasting many months and reaching across the island from Wexford to Mayo. It was clumsily put down by a few stern and fierce rulers who had to employ regular troops that ran away, militia regiments that went over to the enemy, and volunteers who vied with the rebels in cruelty and drunkenness. It was a sickening war; a thousand Frenchmen who took part in it got credit for soldierlike behaviour; they were ashamed of their Irish allies. The conquest was as disgusting to men of sense and taste as the defeats which preceded it. Since 1798 there had been no great improvement. If war broke out it would be at the best only a little swifter. The instability of the Dublin Government was scandalous, nor could it be made a good government by improving the governing class, the Protestant gentry. There was a Catholic Association,

¹ It was said of them that they were thirty thousand strong in the county town on the day of the election, and that they departed, that day only, from the national custom of carrying sticks.

which when interdicted by statute dissolved like a jelly-fish ; its managers knew how to baffle their rulers by forming it afresh with more extension and more venom. The British army, strong only in pensioners, was too small to occupy the open country ; there were no fortresses.¹ In France there was a military establishment which was able to send across the sea thirty or forty thousand men perfectly equipped ; and M. de Polignac, who became in 1829 the ruler of France, was as likely as any French ruler that ever lived to strike a blow for the Papal Church.²

Other men might be afraid to say that they were afraid of an Irish rebellion. The Duke of Wellington bravely avowed the fear ; he knew what war was.

A statesman's merit is weighed against the mistakes that he silently avoids. The Duke might have gone astray in three or four directions ; nor is it difficult to name politicians who in a similar conjuncture would have been tempted to do what he perhaps never heard suggested. In any other country but England it would have been thought politic to communicate with the Court of Rome, and so to bargain as to be free to use the Pope's name in dealing with the malcontents of Ireland and the Catholics of Britain. Statute law forbade any open formal appointment of an envoy, but it was not treacherous to use some unobtrusive agency.³ The Roman Govern-

¹ It was reckoned that forty thousand men were needed to overawe insurgents in 1829 ; and in 1844 this number was reached by adding the armed police to the soldiers.

² M. de Bourmont in 1830 sailed for Algiers from the South of France with this force.

³ Mr. Huskisson, after losing office, sojourned in Rome, and reported

ment was still under recent obligations to England for the recovery of dominion and for respectful treatment in the British dependencies inhabited by Catholics, such as Malta, Trinidad, and Mauritius. Its counsels were at this time moderate ; one Pope had recently saved the life of a Jew condemned by the Inquisition for relapse ; another had, to please the devout king of France, discountenanced the French bishops who by supporting the Jesuits against the ministers endangered the popularity of the Church. M. de Maistre, the literary champion and restorer of the Papacy, had set his face against the bigotry of his master the King of Sardinia. M. de Bonald, the second literary Catholic, had taught men the highest Tory doctrine, that a king is the father of his people, and that representation of rights is as little needed in a nation as in a family. There have been Tories since 1829 to whom the Papacy of that day would have been morally attractive.

If three or four score members of the House of Commons were to be sent to Westminster, as seemed likely, by the priests, was it not prudent to conciliate the priests ? On the other hand, if the priests depended on fees paid by worshippers and were fain to

that the Pope and his friend Cardinal Bernetti were frankly desirous of close friendship with England ; ‘ they must not be asked to disclaim old principles and doctrines, but they would for the future do all that England wished for, as far as possible.’ Protestants as well as Papists have coerced heretics and ‘ maintained the faith ’ by penalties. But it was truly said by a clever Protestant Bishop : ‘ Protestant errors are of little consequence. They die and never revive ; Popish errors can only sleep.’ The most liberal Popes and Cardinals leave their successors quite free to act on any ancient ordinance. They never confess error. When a state makes peace with them, it is only a truce.

humour the passions or whims of their supporters, was it not expedient to set them on a better footing, to give them the comfort which keeps men by the fireside, the independence which exempts them from the service of demagogues ? If endowed, they would cost not more than a constabulary, hardly more than might be saved by retrenching sinecure pensions and royal prodigalities.¹

The easiest of all artifices for keeping the peace of Ireland was the conciliation of Mr. O'Connell. It looked as if he might be promised a step on the ladder of legal promotion if he furthered the enactment of the least possible emancipation. By accepting anything from the Britons the Irish leader would be lowered in the eyes of zealots, and without him the Irish people must again become the plaything of blunderers.

The opposition of Tories could have been averted to some extent by giving steps in the peerage, and by other acts of Crown patronage ; just as Mr. Pitt stopped the mouths of some gentlemen when he was bent on merging the Irish in the United Parliament. To grant such 'considerations' for votes was not thought unbecoming to the strongest Government.

These expedients were not absurd, but they were unworthy of George IV.'s last and best minister. He was content to say to the King, to the Tories of Britain, to the Orangemen of Ireland : ' I have satis-

¹ The cost would have been about half a million a year.

It is believed that George IV. spent two hundred thousand pounds on gold and silver plate for the table. His town house was said to have cost half a million in alterations up to 1829 ; a Committee of the Commons grumbled at this.

fied myself that you can no longer resist the claims of the Catholics without a risk of civil war ; and as victory in a civil war is only less horrible than defeat, I bid you make a handsome, sufficient, and final concession.¹ He knew that he was putting the cup to the lips abruptly ; without a surprise he would have failed. He had taken many months of careful thought to decide on the measure ; he resented in single combat the imputation of perfidy.²

XXIII.

It took ten weeks to effect the change in the Constitution. These weeks were part of the later winter, not a good season for county meetings held in the open air.³ But the nation's pulse was felt. Thirteen

¹ Orange was a town in France, was once under the Nassau family, which became the leading family in the Protestant Netherlands, and supplied Ireland with her deliverer, William of Orange otherwise King William III. of England ; his Irish followers called themselves Orangemen ; his English subjects showed less enthusiasm.

² For fighting this duel he was scolded in a quaint honest letter by the great father of reformers, Mr. Bentham, of whom he had probably never heard. His life was thought by the old philosopher precious and necessary to the commonwealth.

³ A county meeting held by the sheriff was, before the reform of the House of Commons, the most satisfactory organ of popular opinion. George III. gave up his favourite minister and his contest with the provinces of North America, soon after a Yorkshire meeting. The county of Kent met to protest against the Duke of Wellington's Catholic policy ; it was computed or imagined that twenty thousand men were present. Twenty-three years later there was a complete series of county meetings held to proclaim defiance of the Pope. Since then the counties have let the towns speak for them, and the towns have had their own way too much.

hundred and sixty-four graduates of Oxford University gathered from all parts of England to vote for a representative in the House of Commons ; they had to choose between Sir Robert Inglis, a Protestant, and Mr. Peel their old representative, who had resigned his seat on the day on which he declared before Parliament his intention of letting in the Catholics. Of the gentlemen who had this opportunity of speaking for the English people, no fewer than six hundred and nine polled for the minister ; probably they were more enlightened, but not more virtuous than a majority which preferred a thorough Protestant.¹ Mr. Peel's defeat was painful to him, but not without consolation ; for he must have known that his University was still proud of him, and was sure to send him year after year parliamentary aspirants imbued with his new liberality.² It is not easy for a minister to be so consistent as to retain for many years a majority of supporters in electoral bodies so tied to professional tenets as the clergymen who vote as graduates of the two old Universities, Oxford and Cambridge ; and in these constituencies laymen are fewer than clergymen. A minister's change of policy is often called in sacerdotal language hard names ; yet the modern English clergy has seldom been of one accord in condemning a liberal minister, and the vehemence of

¹ In an University election many men vote without polling ; they pair off, trusting each other's honour.

² A good many English statesmen have been complimented, often too highly, on being classical scholars. Mr. Peel seems to have been a really good Latin scholar, so good that his opinion on a question of language would have been valued by professional scholars.

men so gentle in their domestic life may be considered rather the exuberance of a peculiar rhetoric than a betrayal of fixed rancour.

The reference of the question to Oxford graduates was a tolerable substitute for a dissolution of Parliament. The constituency then polled was almost the only one of any magnitude that could have been consulted without turmoil. Many of the voters were, as parsons or incumbents, freeholders enjoying the franchise at home ; some of these would have taken with them to a county poll the freeholders of their parishes ; they were, like most of the peers, fair samples of the rural population, and they were, even more than the lords, incorruptible. From their honest reprobation of Mr. Peel it might be inferred that the rural freeholders were for the most part set against the Catholics. Petitions addressed to Parliament, so far as they could be trusted, proved that the townsfolk were not less afraid of the Pope than were the yeomen. But the change proposed was, after all, neither the imposition of a tax nor the abridgment of any social liberty. Hardly any of the petitioners had any personal antipathy to Catholics ; most of them had never seen a Catholic. Their opinion exploded in a petition. They did not enter into alliance with the Orangemen of Ireland ; to most of them the sight of Irish Orangemen carrying flags in a procession and singing war songs would have been distasteful. Nevertheless it was right to keep them out of the temptation to riot which a general election would have given them. Such towns as Liverpool and Bristol might have been

plagued by mobs shouting No Popery, and beginning mischief with breaking the windows of a Romish chapel.¹

The House of Commons, which in a series of votes decided by two to one in favour of the Catholics, had been put together by election and nomination three years earlier ; it had once affirmed and once negatived a resolution of the same purport. It was an assembly rich in knowledge, seriously interested in politics, accustomed to those refinements which need explanation, and capable of criticising all official statements. It contained an ample supply of clever men ; it was not oppressed by men of fixed ideas or men of positive mind. Viewed in the light that shone two years later, it was not an assembly truly representative of the nation ; if it had been, it would have defied the Catholics. It was the last but one of the assemblies tied closely to the privileged families, the last of those assemblies which cared less for law-making than for the conduct of affairs. It gave the handsomest support to its leader, setting aside for the time the inner mystery of the Court and the prophesying of the uninitiated.

A few hours after the Catholic Relief Bill passed the Commons it was justified by the first minister before the Lords. Here he could use the proxy votes of many quiet gentlemen who did not think it worth while to risk a journey to London before

¹ Attempts were made to form clubs associated with the 'Brunswick Clubs' of the Irish Protestants. Lord Eldon threw cold water on them; he justly thought them bad imitations of the illegal thing called the Catholic Association. Tories are not always as wise as Lord Eldon.

Easter. The newspapers gave them information on which they could form opinions. They were well out of the way of London excitement, nor were there any intriguers to cajole them in the name of the King. There have been for many years, besides these lords, thousands of leisurely and thoughtful men similarly informed and similarly removed from disturbing forces ; and of all such men it might be said in haste that their verdict ought to be taken on a national question. But the titled gentlemen who voted by proxy were specially qualified for public action by that sense of responsibility which grows out of the tenure of land. However dull or timid they might be, they were likely to judge correctly about the King's peace. If the minister said that he could not answer for maintaining order unless certain claims were satisfied, the rural dignitaries were competent to weigh his authority. When the measure proposed is only a relaxation of old precautions and a defiance of professional tenacity, it is not shocking that the minister should lift up a hundred hands and utter a hundred 'ayes.' The lords were two to one for the Catholics ; one Protestant bishop spoke for them ; all the King's brothers but one voted for them ; the Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst endured for their sake scornful notice of his tergiversation. When the bill became law, six Catholic peers took their seats quietly after swearing to abstain from scheming against the Protestant Church. This number has been greatly increased by conversions and by new peerages ; it has not been observed that the Catholic

lords vote as one man. Not one of them has held a seat in any Cabinet ; perhaps there may have been one or two who, but for the exclusions retained in the Emancipation Act, would have been offered the Irish Lord-Lieutenancy.

In the House of Commons Mr. O'Connell, member for County Clare, was not allowed to take his seat, because the Act was not retrospective, and was so interpreted as not to relieve from the old exclusive oaths a Catholic elected before it became law. Legality delights in the ingenious contrivance of delays. The successful candidate for Clare argued at the bar, that is, outside the assembly, for admission. Instead of letting him in, the House directed County Clare to elect again ; and Mr. O'Connell went back for a second contest, but found no adversary ; next year he took his seat under the newly devised promise of good behaviour towards Protestants.

In Mr. O'Connell's absence a bill was passed which he would have opposed. This was for diminishing the number of voters in Irish counties. For it was reckoned that in such a county as Clare thrice as many men polled as in a big English county. Both in England and Ireland a man might vote for two knights of the shire if he had a freehold estate valued at forty shillings a year ; a limit fixed in the fifteenth century, when shillings were scarce, to diminish the number of voters, but applied to Ireland just before the Union to the subdivision of estates for the purpose of increasing the number of voters. The Irish landlords who cut up their land were mostly Protestants.

The petty freeholders were almost all Catholics. As long as Catholics were excluded from Parliament, the squires competing among themselves did not care whether the voters were Catholics or Protestants, and as the more eager or less prudent people were the highest bidders for land, and as the Catholic religion was the more consonant with imprudence, it came to pass in a short time that almost all the counties had Catholic voters in overwhelming masses. Accordingly it seemed certain that, as soon as a political career was thrown open to men of their creed, the Romish priests would select candidates and make their flocks go to the poll for them ; the counties would slip out of the hands of the Protestants who were also the squires. In the recent election all the squires of Clare had supported Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, a Protestant and a Cabinet Minister, and all the peasants had backed Mr. O'Connell.

On general considerations it was reasonable to argue that the forty-shilling freeholders were not to be trusted with votes, but this argument was as reasonable in England as in Ireland. The Act which disfranchised this needy and ignorant class in Connaught should, in theory, take away county votes from the two hundred Middlesex men who for elections were reckoned as the owners of a certain mill at Brentford ; and English squires who had split land into minute holdings that they might have their droves of adherents ready for a contest ought to have seen their devices frustrated by the same rule that pruned the luxuriance of Irish constituencies. But

it was too much to expect that a theory, or a comprehensive view of cognate phenomena, should guide a Tory Minister. Mr. Peel, though politic, was not philosophical. He disliked reform of the representative system ; all that he could do for it was an occasional bit of makeshift. In this case he explored a danger, as a ship's carpenter examines a leak. His little patch of legislation was itself defective, inasmuch as he substituted ten for two pounds ; for it should have been foreseen that, even when holding land worth ten pounds a year, the Irish peasant would obey the neighbour to whom he and his wife had to confess sins. Nor was he thenceforth free to repel the daring schemers who were for altering the representative system ; for he set them the example of innovation ; he had denounced a fault in that which it was for his purposes necessary to call a perfect fabric.

Notwithstanding the jealousies and suspicions betrayed in the new covenant made with Ireland, the Tories are to be praised for having shown, in a sober and business-like temper, a certain tendency or inclination towards the principle held by their rivals the Whigs ; this principle is expressed in the motto or device, ' Trust the people.' Expressed in a short form of words, a doctrine is likely to fasten itself on youthful minds, and to fortify them against the occasional and empirical notions of those who pique themselves on being practical men. No young man connected with those Tories who formed the ministerial section of the Tory party could escape the contagion of Mr.

Peel's influence ; and Mr. Peel was happily delivered from the narrow anxieties of those under whom he had in early manhood served the State and repressed the people. In 1828 he had spoken of the Dissenters' laws in the grudging spirit of a functionary and with the plausibility of an advocate. In 1829 he became a thorough statesman, and his education drew with it the improvement of at least half the aristocracy.

XXIV.

THE Duke of Wellington when ruling England resumed his position as adviser of the French king. He is not the only English Minister that has corresponded privately with a foreign monarch ; but such an action is more remarkable in his case, because he was generally backward in advising where he could not direct. It may be supposed that he was drawn into an unusual attitude by some apprehension. He wrote to Charles X. of France to warn him against Liberals, and to recommend M. de Polignac who had been Ambassador at St. James'. Between the clerical party and the journalists, the French Chambers were less authoritative than the English Parliament ; and the French Ministers were more affected with personal desires, more afraid of courtiers, less obedient to a premier, less well-served by permanent subordinates, than English Ministers. Their King was religious

with the religion of an aged man who has been in youth a man of pleasure ; he could not in conscience abstain from governing, nor derogate from the supernatural majesty of a consecrated and hereditary monarch. Almost all the intellect of the French nation, then teeming with genius, was set in array against him and his theocratic votaries. Students had proved from records that popular councils and revocable choices of leaders were older than the oldest of the historical monarchies, that the priest, who first anointed a captain with oil that was said to have been brought by an angel, was a daring innovator, that the lawyer, who assigned to a priest-made king the legislative power once given by the Senate and People of Rome to a commander of soldiers, was therein taking advantage of his monopoly of learning. What was proved in history was elucidated by professors before crowds of eager listeners ; the professors of Paris were, more than even in the old days of passionate logic, attractive and influential. In the streets and in eating-houses there were the voiceless teachers whose neat and sparkling phrases were uttered every morning and evening in those fugitive papers which reiterate without being wearisome. Never before, never since, was there such a glow of joyful and fearless intelligence as in Paris on the eve of the second revolution. It was not a time of conspiracy, revenge, or vacillation. It could be foreseen that the Parisians would escape the follies and crimes of 1789, being no longer at the mercy of impudence. Their orators were now gentlemen blessed with the enjoy-

ment of the highest civic life, and too brave and shrewd to let it be polluted by harpies. These men could join, as their fathers had not joined, to push down one thing and to set up another ; they could pass with firmness and grace from the championship of legal freedom to the defence of legal order.

But the strength of the French political mind was not known at the time even to the best informed Englishmen, much less to the Tory Minister. He saw the portents of a revolution, and he did not know how one revolution could differ from another. Of the Frenchmen known to him, M. de Polignac seemed the most single-minded and authoritative. It was a tenable view that such a man might have succeeded, where M. de la Fayette had failed, in saving a crowned head. To save the Bourbon monarchy seemed necessary for the peace of Europe. To save it without resorting to the policy of repression was perhaps not impossible ; but they are not to be harshly blamed who then thought it impossible ; for in 1792 the monarchy had fallen for want of plain stiff hardihood.

If Charles X. could be propped up for a few years, he might have a successor similar to his adroit brother Louis XVIII., to whom such a minister as M. de Polignac would not have been necessary or acceptable. The admirers of hereditary monarchy must not be hard on one who bears with the senile crossness of the occupant in reliance on the goodness of the expectant prince.

From an unfinished history of the English revolu-

tion written by their English friend, Mr. Fox, the politicians of France had learnt exactly how kings forfeit thrones. By issuing commands to serve as laws, M. de Polignac followed the English precedent and let his King incur forfeiture. But he reckoned on an army more highly organised than that which James II. had in his pay, more efficient also than that which served Louis XVI. In using this force he made mistakes which the Duke of Wellington would have avoided and Frenchmen afterwards avoided. These were useful mistakes for all parties in France, since they were saved a long and demoralising struggle.¹ That they had to pass through a short and brilliant conflict was good for other nations, because nothing less conspicuous than this would have made on their minds a strong and effectual impression. Englishmen who had despised the French for yielding to fishwomen in 1789 and to mutineers in 1815, admired the new generation of Parisians for its argumentative challenge, its temperate resentment, its unanimous obedience to old patriots, its trustful acceptance of an elected King. Here at last was a body of citizens discerning between good and evil, knowing where to find real enemies and how to deal with them, holding fast the charter of sixteen, the code of thirty, the principles of forty years' standing,

¹ One curious mistake came of ignorance about military terms. It was said in answer to an inquiry at the War Office, that the garrison of Paris amounted to fifteen thousand *effective* men. There were only twelve thousand actually fit for service: to mean 'fit for service' the word 'present' would have been added to the word 'effective.' A statesman ought to be conversant with military details, so as to be able to question military witnesses exhaustively.

conservative in resisting arbitrary monarchy, protestant in kicking against a priesthood, resolute in facing its own army, yet sparing the soldiers' honour. It was not merely that the Liberals of Europe were now consoled for the disappointing popular movements of Spain and Naples, for the pledges cancelled in Germany, and for the shabby little plots and riots of Lord Castlereagh's England. Great indeed was the victory won by Paris for the Liberals of all nations ; but the rare felicity of the 'July Revolution' was that it did not, like other revolutions, frighten and distress the virtuous households which were indifferent or adverse to Liberal principles. It encouraged men without alarming women ; it was to young men a beacon-signal, without reminding old men of conflagration. Had it been a republic that the French formed on the dethronement of Charles X., their neighbours in the islands would have recoiled from an object associated with crimes of fresh memory ; the substitution of a cousin with his heirs looked English enough. The bias against continental forces was in 1830 less decided than in 1815. Their direct imitation of English history made it difficult to accuse these new French Revolutionists of Jacobin wickedness.

The Duke of Wellington, speaking in the name of King William IV., whom he had two years before pushed out of the Admiralty, recognised the parliamentary government of France with its covenanted monarch, and allowed Charles X. to inhabit a house in Edinburgh even more dismal than the house which

was lent by Louis XIV. to that British king whom Charles X. had taken for his pattern. The Duke did not congratulate, nor patronise the King of the French, Louis Philippe ; neither did he take advantage of the new government's insecurity. From the event he did not, like others, draw the inference that his island needed a great change ; nor did he try, as some would have tried, to argue from the street fights of Paris that Tories, offended by the relief of the Catholics, must forget that offence and rejoin the ministerial Tories to make head against innovations ; knowing that the more vehement Protestants would combine against him with the disciplined and eager Whigs and with the suddenly evolved mass of reformers, he said, with an emphasis which was for himself inconvenient but to his assailants wholesomely stimulative, that he was sure the British representative system could not be altered for the better. Such a stiff opinion disqualified him from governing the nation when it was bent on reform.¹ In September he was honoured like a ruler by the multitude of thriving manufacturers which thronged the railway between Manchester and Liverpool. In November he was threatened with violence in London, and he was so fearless about slanders and so careful of the King's peace, that he would not go to the Lord Mayor's banquet lest his unpopularity should em-

¹ This word is here used in the special sense. In English history 'reform' means specially the change of the representative system, as 'reformation' is a term appropriated to the ecclesiastical system. Up to the year 1832 there was, since then there has not been, a division of the English people into 'reformers' and 'anti-reformers.'

broil the mob with the police and bring on innocent bystanders the strokes aimed at rioters.¹ It was said at the time that his unpopularity was due to his declaration against reform made on the first day of the session. But before Parliament assembled the electors had ruled against his policy, partly because he had tampered with the constitution in the foregoing year, partly because they knew that he would not touch its weak points in coming years. The House of Commons had to be renewed according to custom strong as law, within a few weeks of the King's accession : a custom which would be questionable if a new sovereign began his reign with new ministers, but convenient in so far as it gives the people a chance of uttering its opinions without having to answer a direct question on any dispute of parties.

The general election of 1830 was the last quiet one of those which supplied the Tories with what they called perfect legislatures, and may be taken as a sample. There never was in any age or country a state process so rigid in forms and yet so full of discrepancies, so incompatible with theory, and yet so comfortable for theorists.

¹ This was explained in the House of Commons by the leader, Sir Robert Peel ; but the Duke's own words, reported by Sir William Knighton, the confidential secretary of George IV., are more instructive than the formal statement. 'I would have let the King dine with the Lord Mayor, if the law had been equal to protect me. Fifty dragoons would have done it ; but that was a military force. If firing had begun, who could tell where it would end. I know what street firing is ; one guilty person would fall and ten innocent. Would this have been wise or humane, for a little bravado, or that the country might not be alarmed for a day or two ? It is all over now ; and in another week or so will be forgotten.'

The time allowed for it was fixed by the ministers. It amounted to seven weeks of summer ; there had been four weeks of preparation, reckoned from the King's accession. Thus there was plenty of leisure for time-servers to modify their views. An aspirant rejected in August by one set of voters might before mid September find elsewhere a sufficient set of friends, or, in default of voters, a single patron.

Voters and patrons might intend in July to support the ministers, change their minds on seeing how the early contests were decided, and, if their own choice was delayed by the officers who returned the writs, elect in September either trimmers or opposition men. A simultaneous vote could have been taken, like the numbering or census, on a single day, if towns and villages had been allowed to record their decisions each for itself ; but to ascertain the result would have taken some few days. The notion of asking men their opinion at or near their own doors had not occurred to anyone. The voters who chose two knights of the shire were expected to meet at the shire town in open-air assemblies, such as were held by their forefathers before the invention of representative government. The president of the shire, called the Sheriff, mediated between two hosts when there was a contest, but had no power, hardly any pretension, to hinder them from bodily dispute. He was generally the only person who could with personal security listen to the harangues of the candidates and their champions. He was imagined to be capable of counting the hands held up by the two mobs, and

of distinguishing at a glance between the hands of grown-up male freeholders who had a right to show them, and those of boys, women, rack-rent tenants, paupers and strangers, who swelled the throng of the county meeting ; for no attempt was made to exclude from the gathering of qualified electors the humblest dwellers in the county capital. A prudent freeholder, living a few miles from the place where the hustings were raised, did not trouble himself to look at the hustings, but waited for the polling which followed the show of hands. If he lived at a distance of thirty or forty miles, nevertheless he must travel perhaps more than a day's ride, to the one central town, there to enter his name in the poll-book. There were few counties in which the crossroads were so good and the capital so conveniently situated as to make this an easy task for most of the voters. But if a score of yeomen headed by their parson rode twenty miles each way to poll in a body for the two gentlemen whom they preferred, they made a goodly show of downright choosing, and the movement looked like part of vigorous country life, reflecting at once the images of war and of the chase. If half a dozen gentlemen trotted up abreast from a country town they made an effort more honourable than the pursuit of pleasure, and they enjoyed wholesomely the declaration of their will. Counties mustered for and against the Duke of Wellington as they had mustered for and against King Charles in the age in which the character of the English gentleman was matured. Barbarous was the crowding together on the day of

nomination. Inordinate and unendurable were the hindrances of voting. Yet the knight of the shire who braved the crowd at the beginning and the end of a long struggle was the victor in a contest which stirred a joyful pride not known out of England ; and his family treasured with its heirlooms the handsome folios which gave by parishes the names of the voting freeholders. To have been chosen by all Norfolk, or all Devonshire, to have seen friends trooping from wolds and warped fenlands, from staples of broadcloth and hardware, and from dales set with mines and watermills, to York, the second metropolis of England ; this was a solid homely sort of glory such as greater men in greater times have not been able to compass.

Such a victory implied an outlay and an exertion of horse-power which would have sufficed in some well-known ancient summers for the rise or fall of a sovereign. It cost enough to dip deep in mortgages the rival families which contended for honour. It caused great breadths of oakwood to fall ; it made a highspirited lord cease to be more than the nominal owner of an estate which still gave his social influence even after he began to pay away the rents to usurers ; it tried to the utmost the combative energy of newer and more thrifty families which under such an impulse as the reforming movement of 1830 roused themselves to defy the landholding chieftains.¹ But even when a county election failed to be a matter of arrangement between the leaders of the squires, the

¹ In 1826 Mr. John Marshall was elected for Yorkshire unopposed, but his preparations for a contest had cost 17,000*l*.

more plebeian or less conservative electors did not depart so widely from custom as to elect men that were not squires. A county was sure to be able to find amongst the owners of mansions some one ready to aid the many in defeating the private compacts of the few great people without being obtrusively unfashionable. In what is called the first Parliament of William IV., there was a signal variation of county custom.

One of the knights of the shire for Yorkshire was known to Yorkshiremen, not as one that came every September to Doncaster moor to sit with the squires and see the great Northern horse-race, but as one that stormed and fenced in their courts of assize. This was Mr. Brougham, a gentleman of good descent, but belonging to Cumberland not to Yorkshire. Although he set his hand to a strange variety of exploits, he was not known as a rider following hounds. His singular strength of head enabled him to make many speeches at Yorkshire towns more populous than York, on the evenings of days which he had to spend in the service of his clients at York assizes. He was the most effective assailant of the Court, the most trenchant critic of those customs which savoured of superstition and monopoly, the fiercest railer against the half-liberal, half-restrictive politicians of whom Mr. Canning had been the type, the loudest herald of that sort of instruction which tried to dispense with imagination and theology, the only lawyer that argued, in aid of the religious philanthropists, for the abolition of slavery; and, what was more

to the point, he had taken the wind out of the Whig sails by proclaiming, before the echoes of the Paris conflict were hushed, the duty of reforming the representation of the British people. By several avenues he was seen to be threatening an invasion and a seizure of democratic sovereignty ; he was, in fact, hurrying into the enthrallment of a false position.

The populous county of Middlesex had, like Yorkshire, an historical character ; it was decidedly not one of the strongholds of aristocracy. One of its knights in this new House of Commons was Mr. Joseph Hume, a member differing in habit and style from those who sat for counties ; his lifelong task was to examine and prune the accounts rendered by ministers of past and future expenditure, and, although he seemed to do nothing but cavil and protest, he had in the long run more power over the Government than had any demagogue ; for the Treasury was afraid of his censorious parsimony and minute industry. He made parliamentary business more laborious, and he raised the standard of scrupulous accuracy.¹

In the other counties such contests as there were lay between Whigs and Tories, or between Tories who, like the Dukes of Newcastle, Richmond, and Buckingham, had quarrelled with the Minister, and those who, like the Duke of Rutland, adhered to him in spite of his desertion of the Protestant cause. The counties were inadequately represented ; but their members were as a body the most independent of members, and at the

¹ There was behind the men of the newspapers a great authority on trade called Deacon Hume, not connected with Joseph.

same time the truest samples, taken geographically, of considerable neighbourhoods. It was gathered from their decisions that the gentry threw over the last Tory cabinet ; and no conclusion drawn from the general election could be made so broadly and solidly as this.¹

If the unity of the shire could be kept up by men employing horses to bring them together, so that the theory of a neighbourhood was more or less tenable in county elections, with stronger reason might it be held that the cities of London, York, Norwich, Bristol, Exeter, and Gloucester, which had formerly been important in critical struggles and had not yet been eclipsed by modern towns, spoke articulately in the choosing of a Parliament.² Though their voices were at the hustings confused with the clamour of mobs, nevertheless their verdicts were authoritative ; for their voters had formed opinions for or against a

¹ In England, which includes Wales, there were thirty-nine which had two knights each, one that had four, and twelve that had one a-piece ; these ninety-four persons were one-seventh of the House of Commons. In Ireland, as in England, every county was, for parliamentary purposes, a considerable aggregate of persons acquainted with their representatives and exacting from them respectful treatment ; and as Ireland had been at the beginning of modern history passed under the trimming and smoothing machinery of design, her counties were reasonably similar ; none were too great, none too small. In Scotland counties varied in size as in England : some were too small to be thought even in those days fit for separate representation. The indifference of the modern Scots to everything but theology had made them acquiesce in the disfranchisement of almost all householders. It was said of the little lowland shire called Peebles, that it contained six voters, who were unanimous against union with Selkirkshire, but had too high a sense of the market value of their opinions to agree on any other question.

² The most dignified cities were made counties : that is to say, they had sheriffs and the forty-shilling franchise, but they did not by becoming counties widen their range so as to comprise rural districts.

policy or a politician ; they had arrived at opinions, after comparing notes with one another, with the give and take of neighbours accustomed to settle in talk as well as in formal council the affairs of communities. These ancient and famous cities were satisfactory constituencies, although the voters had as freemen obtained their franchise by inheritance and family contrivances.¹ But it appears, on a general view of parliamentary history for the two generations prior to the Reform Bill, that a somewhat excessive value was assigned to the majorities declared after contested elections in these cities, and also in some less conspicuous towns such as Aylesbury. The intelligence of the higher tradesmen was probably keener than that of the county freeholders ; but the family selfishness of lower citizens was less compatible with public spirit than was the peasant's or yeoman's faith in the squire. The small tradesmen who were privileged were molested by the unprivileged populace, and flattered by preachers ; the small farmers were not in that day, as they have been in later days, humoured

¹ The quaintness of English phraseology is illustrated by this paradox ; the voter's 'freedom' was called 'freedom by servitude,' that is by being bound to serve a master in learning a craft. In some cases a gentleman not dwelling in a city could buy for his son the honour and privilege of this servitude or apprenticeship with the franchise or right of voting attached thereto. If there was a competition between rich men, for instance, if a sugar grower of the West Indies wished to be in Parliament and had to bid for the honour against a banker, the freeman could sell his vote with advantage, either for cash or for patronage. This legal fiction of freedom was too solemn to perish hastily. These 'freemen' lived on into the age of real parliamentary representation, and as wealth increased through good legislation, their votes bore higher prices. They had a 'vested interest,' as dear to an English reformer as the dearest of legal fictions.

and cajoled by country gentlemen, and they were then, as they must always be, too sturdy to be afraid of their inferiors. Of the two kinds of fairly honest popular election then known, it seems that the better was in the shires. The cities and the populous towns showed against the Duke of Wellington a much more decisive majority than the shires.

There were amongst the big towns many which had long ago become oligarchical. All power that could be exercised by others besides the King's agents had passed in these towns from the householders in mass to small councils, which bore in a special sense the general term of 'corporation.'¹ A townsman got a share of privilege by being made a member of the corporation by the members. The greater the Parliament became in government, the more valuable became the privileged townsman's right to a seat and a voice in the town-hall wherever the burgesses or member for the borough were chosen by the corporation. If the little family party of Aldermen with their president the Mayor had a thoroughly business-like perception of its interest, it took care to make a show of patriotism and of gentlemanlike party spirit whilst it negotiated secretly with the rich man who

¹ In modern history they are often called 'municipal corporations' to distinguish them from other corporations, such as the Bank of England or a college of Oxford, which they resembled in being able to sue and be sued like persons. 'Corporation' has all the ugliness and none of the convenience of an exotic word. In good Latin the Company of the Bank of England would be a 'college,' and the Corporation of the City of London a 'municipy.' As a bit of English freedom the municipal corporation, like the college, was worth very little before the claws of Royalty were cut in the reigns of William III., Anne, and George I.

wanted a seat in the House of Commons either for himself or for a son or for some one who should speak and vote for him. Preliminary differences were adjusted by competing negotiators, and when the bargain was struck, the vendors of legislative power dined together and drank to the health of the absent gentlemen whose names were to be inserted by the Town Clerk in the writ sent back by the Mayor to London.¹

If there were any bodies of voters that could not be moved by the impatience and the hopefulness of the hour, they would be found in the corporations. A score of separate landowners, or owners of feudal claims on land possessed by others, would probably meet to choose a representative of a Scottish county with more openness of mind and a livelier perception of things to be feared or desired, than a score of elderly shopkeepers accustomed from boyhood to the closest reciprocity and to the most intricate tangle of family connections.² Had these oligarchies limited their choice to men of their own rank, they would have sent to Parliament a herd of creatures almost beyond the reach of generous sympathies, and hardened

¹ Corporations were not always inaccessible. The town council of Edinburgh, consisting of about thirty persons, was influenced by memorials sent in by other public bodies belonging to the city, and by petitions indicating the people's choice of a candidate; although it had been the capital of a nation, it had but one representative; it contained the greatest mass of legal, medical, theological, and scientific intellect that could be found out of Westminster, but its deputy represented only the best of its county families.

² The right of voting was exercised in Scottish counties by men who neither resided nor owned land therein.

against reasoning by the consciousness of mean prosperity. But they were in the habit of patronising the gentry, and of using anglers more elegant than themselves to fish for them in the stews of jobbery. Sons and cousins of lords found it as easy to sit for towns in which they shopped as for the shires in which these towns were situated, and some towns were disputed, like counties, by rival squires.¹ Gentlemen who owed their political honours to aldermen were accessible to the arguments of other gentlemen with whom they had lounged at college, or travelled in Italy, or gambled in clubs. They were less acquainted with their constituents than with their London boot-makers and tailors. In so far as they were Londoners they were rescued from the stolidity of small towns.

Besides the famous cities and the towns muzzled by oligarchy, there were many boroughs, of which some were mere towns, others towns with outskirts of rural land, in which the voters were too numerous to be tied together by intermarriages. Archaeology distinguishes several kinds of franchise held in these democratic boroughs.² Of these the simplest and

¹ Sometimes they became freemen or corporators, with or without houses in the towns.

² When it was resolved by Lord Castlereagh's House of Commons in 1821 to form a new borough, it was necessary to choose some one form of franchise, and the qualification of a voter was fixed at a twenty-pound rating; so that any new house built within the limits of the borough would if occupied give a right to vote. This sort of expansive constituency, with household franchise limited by assessment to rates, would seem to modern Britons so natural that they need to be informed of its difference from another kind, which no doubt seemed in other times not less natural: there were boroughs in which only a certain number of

most rational was the franchise based on the payment of contributions to town or parish expenses. These local taxes were called rates, and they were fixed by assessment on real or visible property, not on income. Nothing has been anywhere invented more easy to understand than the attachment of a voting power to the necessity of paying into a common chest proportionally to the apparent market value of a dwelling. The householder is generally the head of a family : he stays long enough in a place to be a neighbour ; family duties and neighbourly duties make a man fit for a duty concentric with them but of greater diameter, the duty of providing for the great commonwealth by choosing a councillor. But unfortunately the ordinary householders of boroughs had no training for that greater voting which made the Parliament man, for they did not elect any lesser functionaries. They did not choose persons for town councils ; they seldom met to choose parish officers ; in local affairs, which they might be expected to understand fairly well, they were governed by small sets of persons a little above themselves ; they suddenly became Britons and potentates when there was a new House of Commons to make, when their betters could not agree upon the choice of burgesses or found it profitable to invite competition. The vote might be reckoned upon as an occasional source of income.

The purchase of votes had been a common practice

houses or sites for houses gave the franchise. Both kinds of household franchise were territorial ; the freeman's right to vote was personal ; so was the franchise of a Master of Arts in the University of Oxford or in that of Cambridge.

in the generations of increasing wealth. It was illegal, but it was not abhorred. It was not the business of the Government to set the law in motion against those who bought and sold these votes. The King's servants, knowing that the community was a web of interests, and that legal contracts were not more important than implied obligations and irregular services, were slow to set themselves against the ordinary King's subjects, who made money out of their electoral privileges. The Methodists or pious people were seldom, if ever, shocked by hearing that a gentleman had paid down guineas for poor men's votes. To buy a seat in the House of Commons was not so very different from buying a pulpit. Society looked on bribery as it looked on smuggling, as an object of smiles and winks. The austerity of a high statesman was the only thing to be feared by the purchaser of votes; this virtue might at any moment wake up and rouse the Attorney-General to vindicate the outraged purity of the Commons.

Sir Manasseh Lopez was in Lord Castlereagh's last days imprisoned, not uncomfortably, for two years, because he had paid the voters of a petty borough in Cornwall thirty-five guineas apiece.¹ The corrupted voters were summarily deprived of their occasional emoluments, and in their punishment they had perhaps some few fellow-sufferers who had voted gratui-

¹ He entertained virtuous gentlemen in his apartments; their gaiety was broken for a moment at nightfall by the clang of bolts and bars. When his sentence was exhausted he asked leave to stay a few days longer, to finish a hamper of game that had just come from his country house. The 'Annual Register' treats him as a victim of spurious indignation.

tously ; their village ceased to be a borough, but all freeholders rated at forty shillings who dwelt within its boundaries became electors for the county of Cornwall, whether they had or had not been venal. Neither this nor a later disfranchisement of another Cornish borough, nor the keenly debated case of Retford, which incidentally ruined a politician of high worth, can be considered as indicating a serious resolve to check the trade in votes.¹ Many things which were illegal were not thought dishonourable. The sanction of the law which lies in society's resentment does not form itself out of a few special applications of the law separated by long intervals ; but if a law is methodically enforced in the ordinary courts it may happen that offences once thought venial get to look unhandsome.²

To stop the sale of votes would have been the more difficult for the Government, because it leant on the personal interests of many poor voters. To carry on business in the House of Commons it was necessary that about half the Cabinet councillors should sit

¹ Disfranchisement of a borough is effected by Act of Parliament, so that the Peers take part in it ; in 1821 they overruled the Commons in the Grampound case. If the Commons wish to punish the inhabitants of a borough without consulting the Peers, they delay or suspend indefinitely the issue of a writ for a new election, when an election has been declared void ; it is worth observing how meekly the vicious towns accept this chastisement.

² A Minister of Queen Victoria, who had little to do with useful legislation except cavilling at it, has credit for passing an Act which gives to regular judges the duty of examining disputed parliamentary elections ; and a lawyer, who had procured a seat by a process condemned in court, drowned himself. There was found at last an impressive warning against parliamentary corruption, which determined the formation of a social sentiment.

there, and that these five or six ministers should be backed by twenty or thirty subordinate officers not in the secret, but bound to follow the leader of the ministry. It was not easy to arrange that all the gentlemen selected to represent the Court and the public offices should be either knights of shires and therefore connected with landowners, or rich enough to buy borough seats ; yet it was necessary that they should be sent to London as if they were knights of shires or burgesses, and it was desirable that they should be sent back as a matter of course by their constituents if at any time they had to shift from one official appointment to another. In order to do homage to the democratic principle, the merest courtier and trifler, the most timid parasite of the dominant politicians, must seem to sue for the good graces of the common people. There were a considerable number of boroughs, not insignificant as towns, yet unsavoury and shabby, in which the ministers' candidates, whatever their politics, could reckon on majorities. One of these was New Windsor, a town clustering round a royal castle, in which it was not easy to live without being a creditor, or tied in some way to some creditor of George IV.¹ This was not a per-

¹ For other purposes the Thames bounded Windsor ; for parliamentary purposes this great limit was overstepped, and the borough, situated in Berkshire, annexed a little strip of Buckinghamshire because the King had some stables there. A waterman happened to occupy a tenement in this street, and voted as a Windsor man. An election was questioned, and turned on the validity of his vote. It became necessary for a skilled advocate before a Committee of the Commons to cross-examine the voter as to the situation of his bed ; his vote was bad if he slept out of the borough ; ' delicacy to his wife's feelings forbade him ' to say whether he slept on the Berks or Bucks side of his bed.

fectly safe borough for ministers, unless they were on good terms with the King's domestic servants. They were more at their ease in the maritime towns, which contained the King's dockyards and arsenals ; for here they had the spending of many millions, and up to the end of Tory supremacy they could fearlessly give new employment to new tradesmen by the diversion of moneys voted for other purposes. The Board of Ordnance ruled with economy some busy spots on the estuary of the Thames, but these townships had no burgesses. The Board of Admiralty and the Navy Board, with intricate jobbing, controlled the political inclinations of Portsmouth and Plymouth, and by preferring the one to the other for the construction of a ship or a biscuit bakery could reward the faithful and intimidate the wavering. By dangling employment before the eyes of artificers, the same effect was brought about as by making guineas chink in taverns.¹

Over and above the aristocratically elected knights of shires, the popularly elected burgesses of great towns, the purchasers of corporation seats, the bribers of poor men in small towns, and the placemen introduced by the Secretary of the Treasury to the managers of ministerial boroughs, there was a respectable body of politicians lifted above the range of attorneys and poll-clerks. These were owners of boroughs who sent themselves, or friends of owners who were sent by them, to the House of Commons.

¹ Artificers employed by the Government were not, like excisemen, forbidden to vote.

For there were many boroughs, especially in the southern counties, which had in former ages been created by Kings and Queens to give aid to the Court, but had been allowed, like other Crown properties, to lapse into the hands of subjects.¹ These passed from hand to hand, like advowsons of clerical benefices. Sometimes they became the property of rising traders, who earned peerages by opportune services rendered to the Court ; it did not follow that the inheritors of the peerages and the annexed burgess rights were hereditary courtiers ; it might happen indeed that they were patriots eager to divest themselves of their undue privileges.² Other boroughs had been bought by lords of old descent, who from time to time bargained with Ministers for the suffrages of the eight or ten members whom they could send into whichever they chose of the two divisions of the Lower House.³ Seventy years earlier the English aristocracy had

¹ If the Tudor sovereigns had kept all forfeited or confiscated estates as Crown land, there would have been no parliamentary control of the monarchy, because the monarchs would have had no need of taxes, living on rents augmented by the growth of the useful arts. If the Stuart sovereigns had persevered in the Tudor policy of issuing writs to obsequious villages, the House of Commons might have been swamped whenever it was refractory. Tyrants, like murderers, break down only from omissions of one or two necessary devices. Political liberties are in a measure due to lucky oversights.

² Mr. Smith, of Midhurst, rejoiced in the extinction of his borough, which in 1831 returned himself and a namesake.

³ It was said that Lord Darlington bought his set of boroughs to get a Marquisate, and parted with them, that is, voted and made them vote for their extinction, to get a Dukedom. But it would be a great mistake to imagine that in Hanoverian days any British gentleman made any such arrangements in blindfold indifference to the good of the country. Probably there is not amongst the many titled families of Britain one that is at all ashamed, or ought to be deeply ashamed, of its borough-mongering ancestors : Britain does not include Ireland.

been not merely divided into Whigs and Tories, but parcelled by family connections named after leading houses ; each connection had included gentlemen who were not in the cousinhoods, but sat by permission for the appropriated boroughs. Such a connection would hold aloof from debate till a Minister was in danger, and then stipulate for a number of places in the Ministry proportional to its voting force in the two Houses. Since 'the Grenvilles' joined Lord Liverpool there had been no such negotiation between the Treasury and a proprietary body.

Of these parliamentary constellations it has been said by Liberal philosophers that they were undesignedly beneficent, in so far as they enabled seats in the House of Commons to be held by young men. It must be admitted, that a chamber containing six hundred and fifty members can afford room for some score of young men. The youngest ensign, a military title unhappily obsolete, was compelled to sit and vote in a court martial, that he might at once begin his education in military jurisprudence ; a peer as soon as he was of age was safely forced into a committee on a turnpike-road bill. Theory would tolerate the admission to the House of Commons of a young gentleman just released from college, provided he was obliged to listen to discussions and not obliged to vote on the decision of important questions. No doubt the House was a great school for grown-up men, and the lad on whom the world was dawning would learn much if compelled to sit on one of its benches ; unluckily he was allowed to drink and

gamble through the hours of debate, and to burst in upon a solemn deliberation to give perhaps a casting vote.¹ Granted however that the presence of young men was desirable, in order that they might be, whilst in the prime of life, experienced legislators ; it did not follow that sham seats were to be provided for them : there was plenty of room for them in the counties, and in towns situated close to dominant country houses.² Nomination boroughs would never have been defended by reasoners, had there not been a few wise men, mostly Whigs, who nominated candidates of rare merit and gave them sufficient freedom. The ripe wisdom of Sir James Mackintosh would have been smothered in his indolence had he not been by patrician favour member for the hundred of Knaresborough ; but this hundred, besides its own close borough, had sprouted long ago into two offshoots, the close boroughs of Aldborough and Boroughbridge ; and Aldborough gave a seat to Mr.

¹ The term 'casting vote' is, it must be remembered, only in a loose sense applicable to any senatorial vote but the President's. In 1831 it was recorded that a certain member had changed sides and given the Ministers their majority of one in favour of the reform bill ; a certain historian dwells with complacency on the fact that the giver of this casting vote soon afterwards made away with himself. If he made away with himself out of remorse at having opened the flood-gates of revolution, he exaggerated his own importance ; he was neither more nor less responsible than any one of his three hundred companions.

² No rules could prevent, no sound theory condemn, the habitual inclination of a town towards a neighbouring family. In the representative systems of continental nations which have been framed in the light of theory kindled by experience, a town or a department is free to choose a resident, a stranger, or one between the two ; if the voters prefer an untried son of a respected neighbour to a tried or distinguished visitor, they are in their right. In the mother country of democracy, Attica, the sons of good fathers got a start in public life.

Croker, a politician who had it in him to wear out the temper and the health of statesmen. The intellectual standard of Parliament was raised by the thoughtful oratory of Mr. Macaulay, who sat for Calne by the grace of a truly liberal Whig, Lord Lansdowne ; but progress was hindered by the hot head and sophistry of Mr. Sadler, who was employed by a factious Duke to represent falsely the intimidated householders of Newark.

It is easy to count up the able lawgivers and ministers who when in a hurry for seats betook themselves to despicable boroughs ; it is easy also to conjecture that they would have been still better lawgivers and ministers had they been chosen by some thousands of householders of their own acquaintance and neighbourhood.¹ Of the distinguished persons who sat in the unreformed House of Commons, without having gone through the labour and excitement of canvassing, it will be found that as many owed their seats to that direct purchase which is condemned, as to that aristocratic patronage which is defended, by modern liberals. No one who held a seat either by purchase or by patronage was subject to that apprehension of blame which is one of the motives towards industry ; and the temptation to idleness must be thought to have often prevailed so far

¹ Sir Robert Peel as soon as he was of age entered Parliament as member for a borough which his father bought for him just as he would have bought him a horse. Sir Samuel Romilly bought his own seat avowedly to be independent of patrons. They were excellent members of Parliament ; but against the good they did by their membership, so long as they had purchased powers must be set the evil done by the sanction they gave to a bad practice.

as to account for the scanty numbers of men present at important debates and divisions. Nor could the member who had no real constituency discharge the secondary duty of instructing plain citizens in the business of the nation, studied by himself at the seat of government. Sir Robert Peel both taught and learnt politics when he was a burgess of Tamworth, his own market town, better than when he was nominally member for Cashel or for Westbury.

There is reason to think that seats in the Lower, as in the Upper House, were wasted. For the roll of William IV.'s first House of Commons contains many boroughs in which both members have the same name. It has not been shown, and it is hardly probable, that the nation needed the simultaneous presence of two Drakes of Amersham, or two Alexanders of Old Sarum. It can, on the other hand, be shown that there was a poor supply of seats for clever men in the prime and maturity of manhood, for biography has revealed the mental activity of Mr. John Austin, Mr. Charles Austin, Mr. Deacon Hume, Mr. Senior, Mr. Mill, and others, whose aptitude was not discerned by patrons.¹ It would be wrong to suppose that there was any divining rod in the hands of the aristocracy for the discovery of fountains of eloquence, or that the House of Commons, before it became a popular assembly, was richer than it has been since

¹ The defenders of Church and State had been anxious to find champions. Some of them had selected, but not elected, Mr. Southey, a meritorious bookmaker; others had tried to persuade a learned recluse, Mr. Fynes Clinton, to face an audience; eventually they had a literary gentleman of light calibre, Mr. Praed, to speak for them.

in legislative ability. Nevertheless it was very nearly clever enough to undertake the task of purging itself, and it was a great advantage to all concerned that it was so far respected by the people, even by reformers, as to be hopefully entrusted with the office which a people in revolution would have assigned to an extemporised 'constituent' assembly. It was in a position to dispense with its cleverest man's services ; it could spare Mr. Brougham. There was no demagogue, not even the victorious Mr. O'Connell, of whom it was afraid. Although aristocratic, its character was determined by courageous aristocrats, who forestalled the demands of theory and of discontent. The governing families whose titles were Bedford, Spencer, and Derby, would have sufficed of themselves for furnishing out of their stock half the Treasury Bench.

Lord John Russell, a younger son of the Duke of Bedford, was known for zeal and toughness displayed in the unsuccessful combats of 1821, and the easy victories of 1828 ; he was thirty-eight years of age, and but for his Whig principles might have been an experienced minister. Mr. John Spencer, who bore by courtesy his father's second title of Viscount Althorp, had recently been chosen as leader by a considerable body of liberal Whigs, who had long been in want of a leader ; he was at once a man of business and a sportsman, so that whilst free from selfishness he enjoyed party strife and state papers. He had been heard to say that he thanked his stars he could never be Prime Minister, because he could not talk

French ; but he had no ‘ John Bull ’ prejudice against the new-fangled art of political economy. Mr. Stanley, grandson of the Earl of Derby, had every qualification for statesmanship except sound knowledge and methodical attention to the opinions of men better informed than himself. A system which bred such noblemen as these could not be reprobated. It was to be altered into a less imperfect representation of the people ; but of the forces that were to effect this change the finest and rarest was the courage of its well-born gentlemen.

France

SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENTS.

1815. *March*.—A Norwich mob tried hard to kill, for supporting the Corn Law, Mr. Coke, M.P., then aged 60, who during the tenure of his estates invested half a million pounds in reclaiming and fertilising land.

The Mint was reformed by Mr. Wellesley Pole.

The United States agreed with the United Kingdom to admit each other's ships on payment of dues without inequality.

September.—Lord Castlereagh wrote to the Allies proposing that France should restore the works of art taken as spoil from foreign cities.

1816.—The Bank of England was allowed by Parliament to divide profits in the way of bonus, so that each share was augmented by one-fourth, and the whole share thus augmented bore the 'ordinary dividend' which since 1807 had been 10 per cent. Because it was thus allowed to raise its capital from eleven to fourteen millions, the Bank was required, by the Act, to lend three millions at three per cent. to the Government.

The House of Commons voted 36,000*l.* for the

purchase of the Greek sculptures called the Elgin marbles, rescued from the barbarous rulers of Athens.

A Commission on weights and measures, in which sat Mr. Wollaston and Mr. Young, luminaries of science, reported in favour of reform and simplicity.

The pillory was abolished, except for perjury.

The House of Commons, complying with petitions and clamour, forced, by a majority of thirty-seven, the Tory Ministers to give up the taxes on income and on malt which were still wanted for paying off the debts contracted in the war, and to go on borrowing in time of peace. It was afterwards computed that it took fifteen years of peace to pay for one year of war.

1817. *February* 18.—Mr. Francis Horner, M.P., a Whig, died, aged 38, leaving a good example.

November 19.—The Princess Charlotte was buried, There were funeral sermons on that day in all Scottish Churches except Mr. Andrew Thompson's ; he would not preach till the next Sunday.

The Irish Exchequer was consolidated with the British.

There was a dearth in Western Germany and Holland as well as Britain. About sixteen million bushels of wheat were imported into Britain.

Mr. Frankland Lewis drew the report of the Commons Committee on Poor Laws, stating with truth and authority 'that it is not feasible for the State to provide employment for all who want it ;' two years

later the same thing was said by another Committee more pointedly.

Mr. Richards published 'Principles of Political Economy and Taxation.'

1818. *May and June.*—There was a struggle between Whigs and Tories on the temporary Act for the watching and coercion of aliens. In the Commons the Tories were three to one, but did not muster more than a hundred in any division. In the Lords the Tories were two to one.

August.—The Reverend Sydney Smith, a Whig, thought the Ministers quite right to prosecute Mr. Hone.

October.—Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington, representing the United Kingdom, settled with the Allied Sovereigns at Aix-la-Chapelle the release of France from foreign armies, and the ransom to be paid by France.

November 2.—Sir Samuel Romilly, M.P., a Whig, died, aged 61. Next day Lord Eldon was too much affected to sit in Court.

This year General Gage Hall governed the sugar-growing island of Mauritius, and stopped the illegal import of slaves from Madagascar.

In this year the relief of the poor in England cost nearly eight millions, raised by rates on real property.

1819.—The Foreign Enlistment Act, 59 George III. c. 60, was read a second time in the Commons, after a vote in which there were 155 for it, and 142

against it. It became law, and though proved to be ineffectual, was maintained as a costly ornament till 1870.

The Statute 59 George III. c. 46 abolished the ancient law of appeal in murder and trial by battle, since this superstition had recently been revived to enable a homicide to escape trial by jury.

The laws against melting and exporting coins were repealed.

Lord Archibald Hamilton, M.P., a Whig, carried in the Commons, against the Ministers, by 149 to 144, a motion for the appointment of a committee which was to inquire into the Scottish burghs and their municipal government. Reform had been demanded by a great majority of the burghs.

Mr. Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer, got for the Treasury by a State Lottery, 240,000*l*.

It was in vain demonstrated to Mr. Vansittart that he was losing money in the payment of annuities, because in 1808 there had been a gross mistake made in calculating the duration of life.

For the encouragement of British farmers, a duty of sixpence a pound was set on imported wool.

1820. *February* 27.—The ministers returned thanks in the Chapel Royal for escaping from Thistlewood's murderous conspiracy, called the Hay-loft Plot.

Lord Cochrane, Admiral of the Republic of Chili, commanding the war-ships of the new state, overpowered the ships of Spain on the West Coast of South America.

Mr. Tooke, a political economist of authority, drew the petition of the London merchants in favour of Free Trade.

Parga, a town in Albania, was given up, conformably with treaty, to the Turks ; its Greek inhabitants were compelled to sell their lands and go into exile. English liberals, such as Lord John Russell, M.P., and Mr. Hughes, the traveller and historian, were pained by the surrender of a place long held for the free Greeks by an English garrison ; Mr. Goulburn, a minister, defended it.

Three English judges said they thought it lawful to place deadly engines in game preserves ; Mr. Sydney Smith thought they were wrong.

The whipping of women was forbidden by the Act 1 George IV. c. 57.

There were in England fourteen thousand power looms.

1821. *February*.—Mr. Keats, the best poet, died, aged 24.

May 1.—The Bank of England began again to cash all its notes of all values.

May 5.—General Bonaparte died. To George IV., then in Ireland, it was announced : ‘Sire, your greatest enemy is dead.’ ‘When did she die?’ asked the King, assuming that it was his wife that had died.

May 23.—Mr. Brougham in Parliament assailed the Constitutional Association, which had for four months spent much money on prosecuting ‘libellers.’ It died out in a year.

June 14.—Lord King, a Whig, descended from one of the founders of the Whig school, Mr Locke, denounced in the House of Lords an attempt made by Dr. Marsh, Bishop of Peterborough, to set up a new test of orthodoxy on examining a curate, not for holy orders, but for licensing to a curacy.

Mr. W. Turner, a clerk in the Bank of England, escaped conviction on a charge of forgery because the witness was thought a doubtful Christian.

Mr. Huskisson wrote the report of the Commons Committee on agricultural distress, stating with diffidence that agriculture cannot solidly flourish unless the State abstains from interference with the application of capital to any branch of industry ; he had been supported by Mr. Ricardo ; the friends of the farmers, being outargued, had ceased to attend the Committee. The House sent the Committee back to report again with the leader, Lord Castlereagh, as Chairman. He did his best to follow Mr. Huskisson, but the farmers got a loan of two millions.

The property in Britain insured against fire was valued by the owners at four hundred million pounds.

In a very rich part of Somersetshire a labourer's wages were a shilling a day all the year round ; on the birth of his fourth child he got parish pay in aid of wages.

Mr. Peel became Home Secretary, succeeding Lord Sidmouth.

1822. *June.*—Mr. Stuart of Dunearn, a Whig, was

tried for killing in a duel Sir Alexander Boswell, a Tory, by whom he had been libelled; he was acquitted.

August.—Lord Castlereagh, otherwise called Londonderry, died.

Mr. Canning, his rival, wept on being told of this.

September.—Lord Amherst, an obscure person, went to govern India instead of Mr. Canning, who was kept at home for the Foreign Office, and in succession to Lord Hastings.

The Caledonian Canal was opened for ships; its twenty-three miles of made waterway cost 1,150,000*l.*; the investment bore no interest.

Vaccination, discovered twenty-five years earlier, was introduced into London hospitals.

Cruelty to beasts of burden and cattle was made illegal by the Act 3 George IV. c. 71.

1823.—Mr. Ricardo, M.P., a philosopher who had made a fortune on the Stock Exchange, died aged 55; he continues to be the authority on money.

Eleven thousand silk weavers petitioned against the repeal of a statute which empowered magistrates to fix their wages, and they were backed by Lord Eldon and a majority of the House of Peers.

Seventeen thousand freeholders of Yorkshire, being one-third of the constituency, petitioned for reform of the House of Commons; from the division on reform nearly one-third of the House stayed away.

Reform of the Court of Chancery was attempted by Mr. John Williams, M.P., who was afterwards a common law judge.

To relieve distress in Ireland, private persons in Britain collected 350,000*l.*

1824. *January 21.*—Sir Charles Macarthy, Governor of Cape Coast Castle, in tropical West Africa, was defeated and killed by the Ashantees ; the settlement was in danger till May.

February 6.—Mr. John Smith, a missionary, died in Demerara of cruel imprisonment, having been sentenced to death by a court-martial for befriending slaves ; his sufferings are thought to have helped those who were for abolishing slavery.

April 19.—Lord Byron, the most fashionable of poets, died in Greece with honour.

A Committee of the Commons reported in favour of rescinding all laws which hindered British artisans from residing in foreign countries.

The Austrian Emperor paid 2,500,000*l.* of the 6,000,000*l.* formerly lent by the King of England during the great war ; therefore the House of Commons spend 500,000*l.* on building churches, 300,000*l.* on rebuilding Windsor Castle, and 57,000*l.* on buying Mr. Angerstein's pictures for a National Gallery of Art.

1825. *March 21.*—The first bill for the Manchester and Liverpool Railway was laid before a Committee of the Commons, and in two months was argued down by lawyers.

July 6.—The King's speech at prorogation of Parliament said that 'general and increasing prosperity pervaded every part of the kingdom ;' this meant chiefly speculative trade or bubbles.

The judge-made law, which treated as a crime under the name of conspiracy a mere agreement of workmen to abstain from work so as to raise wages, was abrogated by the Act 6 George IV. c. 120.

Salt was relieved from excise ; thenceforth it was used in making glass and soap.

The statute of 1660, which forbade the export of wool, was repealed.

The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was formed by Liberals.

The Stockton and Darlington railway was opened for haulage of coals.

December 5.—The breaking of banks commenced, at the rate of ten or twelve a week for six weeks.

1826. *January.*—Sir Walter Scott, a country gentleman, and a supreme man of letters, became a bankrupt through over-trading ; in the next five years he cleared off 70,000*l.* of debt by writing good books, working fourteen hours a day.

March 14.—Mr. Wilmot Horton, the additional Under Secretary of the Colonial Office, proposed in Parliament the encouragement of emigration ; it cost 20*l.* to take a pauper to Canada.

August 7.—The English conclusively defeated the Ashantees, but lost 800 men killed, 2,000 wounded.

State lotteries were given up for ever.

The Marquis of Stafford subscribed for a thousand shares in the Liverpool and Manchester Railway Company ; its bill was opposed in the Commons by the Honourable Edward Stanley, in the House of Lords by the Earl of Derby and the Earl of Wilton ; but it became law.

1827. *April* 28.—The office of Lord High Admiral was by Mr. Canning restored, and was taken at his request by the Heir Presumptive to the Throne, without that seat in the Cabinet which had been held by the First Lord of the Admiralty.

August 8.—Mr. Canning died, aged 56.

Mr. Peel, being out of office, brought in a bill for enabling creditors to obtain the payment of small debts without going to the great judges ; he was backed by Lord Althorp, who had made four similar attempts : he failed.

The strict law about aliens was dropped ; registration of aliens was kept up.

Mr. Finlaison, an arithmetician, persuaded the Treasury to set right to some extent the mistake pointed out in 1819, by which it lost 8,000*l.* a week on annuities.

Lord Suffield's Act, 7 & 8 George. IV. c. 18, made it a misdemeanour, punishable by two years' imprisonment, without hard labour, to set a deadly engine in a game preserve.

1828. Lord Palmerston in the Cabinet urged that the Egyptian troops in the Morea should be held as

hostages for the release of Greeks taken from the Morea to Egypt and sold as slaves ; when out of office he pressed the point on Mr. Peel : he failed.

May 19-25.—The resignation, or the dismissal, was effected of Mr. Huskisson, the doctrinaire minister who understood commerce.

June 11.—Professor Dugald Stewart, a great teacher of public men, died, aged 75.

October 2.—The London University, founded by reformers and free-thinkers, was opened by Professor Charles Bell, the physiologist.

The Zoological Gardens were opened.

Lord Palmerston voted against the repeal of the Test and Corporation Act.

Lord Melbourne discovered that the Duke of Wellington was not quite so great a man as he was generally thought.

December 15.—Lord Liverpool was buried, nearly two years after he ceased to rule.

1829.—The Heir Presumptive to the Throne ceased to be Lord High Admiral, not having had his travelling expenses allowed him by the Duke of Wellington, First Lord of the Treasury.

Mr. Charles Butler, a Catholic, was made a King's Counsel, aged 79, the first of his Church who held this rank.

Sir Humphrey Davy, a great discoverer in science, died, aged 51.

Sir George Murray, Colonial Secretary, confirmed and pronounced irrevocable Governor Bourke's

ordinance which gave the rights of British subjects to the Hottentots of Cape Colony.

The new General Post Office of London was completed ; it was set about in 1815.

There were in Britain fifty-five thousand power looms.

There were in Britain twenty-nine thousand five hundred miles of turnpike roads, that is to say, roads on which tolls were levied at gates under special Acts of Parliament ; they cost a pound a yard, by the estimate of Mr. Macadam, the improver of road-making.

1830.—Lord Blandford, a malcontent Tory, proposed in the House of Commons to abolish all venal or proprietary boroughs without compensating any loser, because the borough markets had been thrown open to Catholics.

The Whig country gentlemen, having for many years had no worthy leader, chose as their leader Lord Althorp, aged 48.

Sir Jonah Barrington, Judge of Admiralty in Ireland, was dismissed by the Crown at the request of the Lords and the Commons.

A thousand bankers petitioned that forgery should cease to be a capital crime, as they could not get forgers convicted.

July 29.—Mr. Grote, a philosopher, gave 500*l.* to help the revolutionists of Paris.

September 15.—The first passenger train went on the Liverpool and Manchester railway, and by the

end of December there had been seventy thousand passengers.

November 2.—On the opening of the session Earl Grey elicited from the Duke of Wellington his opinion that no improvement was needed in the representation of the people.

November 15.—The Whigs proposed that the Government's scheme for the payment of the King's servants (the Civil List) should be referred to a Committee of the Commons ; two hundred and four members voted with the Ministers ; two hundred and thirty-three members, of whom some were vindictive Anti-Catholics, voted for the motion.

November 16.—The Tories resigned their offices ; the Home Office had been perplexed by many threatening letters.

The office of Privy Seal had been held in the Tory Cabinet, with Earl Grey's approval, by the Earl of Rosslyn, a Whig, who had been Mr. Stuart's second in the duel fought with Sir A. Boswell.

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